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The nurses

Jobs disappear, technology changes, patient needs increase—and working nurses bear the brunt. Across Canada, they struggle to maintain standards in a complex and traditional health-care system. In Calgary, they must adapt to the closure of the city's only downtown hospital. Is it any wonder they feel burned out?



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Few Canadians may be aware of the proposed Multilateral Agreement on Investment, but critics warn that it could cost the country thousands of jobs.



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As an election approaches, Britain is bursting with pride in fashion, music, movies and even food. British style is hot once again.



12 The election: ready, set...

The Liberals try to clean house with a flurry of announcements—but the long, dormant national party debate intrudes upon their pre-election efforts.



From The Editor

The Liberal loot bag



It was the week of the squeaking wheel in federal politics. It was the week of the special interest, from tobacco companies to auto-makers, was too demanding to placate. Thus cigarette sales will stay on Jacques Villeneuve's car to keep the Grand Prix in Montreal. There will be salmon for British Columbia, cod in Newfoundland, a constitutional offer on schools for Quebec and a new plan for Banff National Park. There was a \$205-million, or, perhaps, to end the messy lawsuit by developers agreed by the Liberal decision—after the last election—to build the Pearson airport privatization in Toronto. Bowing to the reality of a court decision, the Liberals agreed to extend the Keweenaw commission on tainted blood—but only after they figured out that his controversial report will now come out after the election expected to be called this Sunday for June 2. All that, plus a tough message to crack down on killer gangs in Quebec.

What? What a gaffe! It is the great election goods grab. Come on down and get your loot bag. The Natural Government Party of Canada is in full gear, anxious to please and raring to go. So, are the other parties. But in the country?

Will voters conclude that the million-dollar cost of the vote is a waste, at a time when the federal Liberals have almost two years to go before they must call an election? Or will they be persuaded, as the Liberals will argue, that the time has come to refresh the mandate of the party, now that it has restored the nation's finances and established an image of competence and integrity?

Those are questions that can only be answered when the polls close next Monday on the election stage. All the polls and punditry stand for naught when the votes are dropped and candidates

start knocking on doors. That is why a prime minister, especially this one, must always give constant attention to the liberal decision to care. A Christian minister allowed last week that there was still a "50-per-cent chance" that the boss will not call an election. But then he acknowledged that it is highly unlikely that all the preparations, including the PM's itinerary for a five-week campaign starting on April 23, would be scrapped.

Still, the Liberals are worried about two unpredictable factors. One is the chronic unemployment issue, which does not play well against Clinton's vow to create jobs, jobs, jobs. The other is the potential that the Reform party will prosper because of a determination by voters in English Canada to deny the separatist Bloc Quebecois status as the official opposition party in the next House of Commons. Reform cannot topple the Liberals—but they certainly would profit in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario if the people decide the party is better suited to stay the Bloc than the Tories. Even some Liberal-leaning swing voters could move their votes to Reform because they want a strong federalist opposition in Parliament. There is certainly a feeling in the land that the Liberals have had too long a ride for the past three years and six months. In that scenario, Reform could emerge holding the balance of power in the event of a minority government. It is an outside chance given the current polls, but it apparently has prompted a Liberal outpouring of goodies and gifts. The Natural Government rules.



Villeneuve keeping Montreal's Grand Prix

Robert Lewis

Newsroom Notes:

INSIDE REPORTS

This week's cover package, starting on page 24, offers two close encounters with the beleaguered world of health care. In *Healing*, Assistant Editor Shweta Gupta Druggist spent a week at the IWK Grace Hospital in and the recently integrated Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre for her report



Doyle Druggist, Enloe's dedication

and professionalism she encountered. "Doyle is not a few years ago," she notes, "but it is nice to see a nurse who has simply given up the attempt to maintain standards

Across the country in Calgary, Acting Bureau Chief David Enloe kept a journal over the past few months of his personal observations of a surreal event in the city's life: the closure of the 107-year-old Calgary General Hospital. "Shattering a respected, well-used institution has been a wrenching experience for Calgary," says Enloe, who sat in on administrative planning meetings and interviewed hospital personnel and patients on the wings. "The debate will continue for some time over the wisdom of leaving a city this size without a downtown emergency department," notes Enloe. But as of last April 8, the doors were closed for good.



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Smoking: an unfortunate, misleading message?

Degrees of 'cool'

You have read out a most unfortunate and misleading message ("The new set laws," Cover, April 14). Smoking is not "cool," as your cover article put it. ("Blackish Anti-Incense laws are making smoking cool again"). Smoking is an addictive habit that actually costs many millions of the world's currency to a horrible and painful death. What is even more tragic is the many innocent bystanders who become poisoned by another person's uncontrollable urge to light up. We can drink until the cows come home the right of an individual to smoke tobacco products. That right ends, however, at the entrance of my own respiratory tract.

Greg Moore
Delta B.C. BC

I am not a smoker, and I think smoking is a disgusting habit that ought to be backed by every one of the seven million Canadians who light up each day. But while the act of breathing in more than one thousand chemicals makes me gag, the bylaw that prevents patrons from smoking in Toronto bars and

restaurants was simply not understandable. These people are paying customers. I do believe in protecting children and non-smokers from the ill effects of smoking, but we must remember two key points: people choose to smoke voluntarily and freely, and we live in a free-market economic system where, if demand, profit and few restrictions exist, the product or service would be provided.

Michael Duxon
Burlington, Ont. BC

When will it ever be cool to have steady breath, hair, clothes, stained teeth and fingers, wrinkled skin, a raspy voice, annoying cough, cancer, emphysema, heart disease, and 40 other smoking-caused ailments, including sterility and impotence? I've always been a rebel, but I'd have to be an idiot to smoke just to fit in.

Joy Sharkey
Kamloops BC

Your article and the defiant smokers it portrayed missed the point of the Toronto bylaw. There was nothing in the law that prohibited smoking. It was about the silent of restaurant and bar owners, who profit from the addiction, to protect the health and pocketbooks of their patrons. Responsible establishments in business for the long run will provide the necessary separate, well-ventilated areas for their patrons. Quick-back operators will disappear when patrons realize that there are better places to go.

Edward Craig
Calgary BC

Smoke spirals everywhere, even in non-smoking areas. The addicts who try to quit have my admiration and encouragement. Others grow they have exchanged smokers for a cigarette and are still self-centered babies. These rebels consider their right to smoke more important than the harm they inflict upon others. Some cool came.

Russell D. Grotzinger
Richmond, Ont. BC

'Big brothers'

Prof. Hector Hargreaves's remarks on the state of our universities are depressing indeed ("The campus of officious politeness," *The Star* April 10, April 7). But surely he has made a mistake! It is delightful to recognize the public that at my university, where our names may recently have been circulated by disaffected persons, academic freedom is scrupulously protected. Spontaneous or frivolous accusations are promptly and

Smokers' rights

I fail to understand why the majority of people can't empathize with smokers ("The New Outlaws," Cover, April 14). All they want to do is kill themselves, kill their family members and friends, pollute the environment and bankrupt the health care system. They want to do all this, furthermore, under the guise of human rights while breaking the law. What's the big deal?

Glen Bachman
The Pas, Man.

Indignantly disconcerted, justice and due process are methodically observed in cases of academic discipline. Sanctions courts are unknown, and candidates for administrative positions are carefully screened to ensure that power "junkies" and other unstable characters are never appointed. It is not too much to say that all of us teachers and researchers regard our administrative superiors as big brothers and sisters. In elementary institutions like ours, protection by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is superfluous.

Hugh Howell,
Professor of religious studies
University of Calgary
Calgary BC

I salute Prof. Hector Hargreaves's courage. I have worked for more than 20 years in a school but very much worse academic or social. My estimation not only endorses all the characteristics Hargreaves describes as being generally prevalent, but in addition administrative positions are often held by boogymen. These illbred tyrants have resulted in a regime of terror for the past generation, and produced a faculty too cowed to be effective at anything important. It seems we need a housecleaning on a national scale.

G. E. Newman,
Professor of Biology
St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonish, N.S.

Necrophilia

Recently, I saw the Lynne Segalovich film *Dead* ("Death and the maiden," *Times* April 10), and found it deeply disturbing. My stomach churns when I think of Segalovich's besotted gormogon of a pretty young woman's obsession with pretty young men, who in order to satisfy her sexual craving must be dead, as such are acceptable. I can't help but think what violent response would be launched if it were the story of an attractive young man having intercourse with the bodies of pretty but dead young

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Opening Notes

Edited by BARBARA HICKINS

Taking aim at the right

The Liberal strategy to retain the bulk of Ontario's 103 seats in the upcoming election depends on splitting the right-wing opposition between the Conservatives and the Reform Party. So Liberal strategists have devised a crafty scheme: targeting about their geo-control law, which is unpopular to both Reform and the Tories. In late 1995, the Liberal government passed tough legislation to limit urban sprawl headwinds and to require mandatory rezoning of farmland. Many rural Liberal MPs feared that this law would hurt them at the polls. But several recent election surveys indicate that the geo-control issue divides the electorate in interesting ways. Liberal strategists have concluded that most voters, including most rural women, support geo-



Extending budgets in a feminist drive: most women support geo-control.

control. Meanwhile, although both the Conservatives and Reform have promised to repeal the law, the most vocal opponents have been Reform. Armed with these findings, strategists have urged Liberal MPs to praise their party's geo-control vision at every opportunity. That way, they will keep Reform supporters in the fold—and continue to splinter the opposition vote.

Nelligan's return

The steady three-hour play, which opened on April 13 at the Cort Theatre in Manhattan, is called *An American Daughter*. But the actress playing the lead is a Canadian, screen and theatre veteran Kate Nelligan. After an eight-year absence from Broadway, Nelligan, who has been nominated four times for a Tony Award, is portraying typical David Hughes, a wife, loving mother, brilliant doctor and Georgetown resident. The story follows Hughes through a roller-coaster week as she swells con-

fusion in suspicion against him. But she is discovered to have once ignored a summons for jury duty. The ensuing media frenzy is all too familiar to anyone who remembers Zoe Davis, Kimba Wood or Lara Garcia, all former based nominees of U.S. President Bill Clinton who were trapped up over summer mudslops in their backwoods. Like everything else by playwright Wendy Wasserstein—who won Tony and Pulitzer prizes in 1989 for *The Heidi Chronicles*—the new play has downy plenty of asides and speculation, not only because of its author's profile

but also because of its political subject matter. The reviews, however, have been mixed. Linda Winer of *New York Daily News* described *An American Daughter*, calling it "daring" and "feministically mooring." But Ben Brantley of *The New York Times* panned the play as "bawdy misanthropy" with its weighty material. "The dazzling Ms. Nelligan, an expert in playing conflicted souls," Brantley added "is misled in an idealized, passive role that seems little more than a poster for Ms. Wasserstein's feelings about a country that continues to thwart its best and brightest women."

Keeping track of Canadians

Elections Canada's new permanent electronic registry of voters, due for completion by April 26, means that Canadians will never again find themselves getting gains of transparency in their democracy. But the creation of any government list raises the eyebrows of those concerned about privacy. How the information might be used. The registry, which includes a voter's sex and date of birth, will be the basis for subsequent voters' lists for elections at all levels of government. And it will track voters' changes of address using information from provincial vital statistics offices, which keep track of births and deaths, and drivers' licenses. The registry will be available usually to political parties and elected members, and will be available to candidates during an election campaign. That sharing has Privacy Commissioner Bruce Phillips, who worked with Elections Canada during the creation of the new rules, concerned. "If he gives the registry an overall A," in the end," Phillips says, "the far-reaching data transfer to use of federal databases are concerned."

A sticky situation

With more than 500 suggestions for commemorative stamps from which to choose each year, Canada Post selects about 20, usually to honor a special person or event in Canadian history. So everyone went up when the post office recently awarded a 40-cent stamp celebrating the 75th anniversary of Canadian Tire. If the stamp—which includes a depiction of a man going to work on a bicycle in a home from the chain's television ad—seems a little commercial, that could be because it's. While Canada Post apologists refused to discuss business arrangements, readers say Canadian Tire contributed about \$200,000 to underwrite the stamp's production costs. Not only has Canadian Tire decorated store windows with marching posters, but its stores are also selling specially designed 12-stamp booklets. That, not surprising, does not sit well with Stampers' Group of Canada Post's largest franchisee network. "Maybe they should remember the old adage: if you can't lick 'em, join 'em."



Party headliners

Becoming a journalist has never been a barrier to entering politics in Britain—Churchill, for instance, was one—and those entering this month's general election are no exception. BBC war correspondent Marisa Bell, who is running as an independent, is the most prominent media candidate. When asked about any unease in the BBC atmosphere over a journalist jumping into the political fray, Bell said, "The network's chief ethical correspondent, says there was some initial embarrassment. 'But Marisa's war experience makes him a bit of a special case.' Not that special, really. Both Labour and the Tories have several journalists running for Parliament. Such cross-overs are rare in North America, where detachment from politics is part of a journalist's professional code. 'You must understand we have a much more partisan press in Britain,' says *Canadian media critic* Jay Greenfield. 'No one here is surprised that a Daily Telegraph writer would run for the Tories, because everybody knows they work for a Tory paper in the first place.'

BEST-SELLERS

FICTION

1. *The Girl on the Train* by Lucy Farrow (10)
2. *The Girl on the Train* by Lucy Farrow (10)
3. *The Girl on the Train* by Lucy Farrow (10)
4. *The Girl on the Train* by Lucy Farrow (10)
5. *The Girl on the Train* by Lucy Farrow (10)
6. *The Girl on the Train* by Lucy Farrow (10)
7. *The Girl on the Train* by Lucy Farrow (10)
8. *The Girl on the Train* by Lucy Farrow (10)
9. *The Girl on the Train* by Lucy Farrow (10)
10. *The Girl on the Train* by Lucy Farrow (10)

NONFICTION

1. *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* by Robert Bly (10)
2. *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* by Robert Bly (10)
3. *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* by Robert Bly (10)
4. *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* by Robert Bly (10)
5. *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* by Robert Bly (10)
6. *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* by Robert Bly (10)
7. *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* by Robert Bly (10)
8. *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* by Robert Bly (10)
9. *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* by Robert Bly (10)
10. *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* by Robert Bly (10)

The truth about liars

Michael, B.C., author Andreas Schneider specializes in tales of high-society liars, *Charismatic and Charming* features 17 stories of dubious dealings, including one about the leading philanthropist who once lived in the White House. "Discovery" helped him to the secrets of a Mexican elite.

POP MOVIES

Blasting into theatres

After a long time, the new stars of Hollywood, the most in a recent past, are back in the spotlight. *Blazing Saddles* is the special effects movie. Using all the tricks of their trade, including new innovative methods involving advanced light and sound, they have created a hilarious film that will send you laughing. Los Angeles.

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1. <i>For the Love of Money</i>	\$1,000,000
2. <i>The Girl on the Train</i>	\$1,000,000
3. <i>How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying</i>	\$1,000,000
4. <i>The Girl on the Train</i>	\$1,000,000
5. <i>The Girl on the Train</i>	\$1,000,000
6. <i>The Girl on the Train</i>	\$1,000,000
7. <i>The Girl on the Train</i>	\$1,000,000
8. <i>The Girl on the Train</i>	\$1,000,000
9. <i>The Girl on the Train</i>	\$1,000,000
10. <i>The Girl on the Train</i>	\$1,000,000

Source: *Canadian Book Review*

Passages



DIED: Former lawyer, senator and (senior) president **Clayton Kopp**, 78, of Mount St. Helens, in B.C. Born in Seattle, immigrated to Palestine with his family in 1935.

World War II, he enlisted in the British army, rising to the rank of major. He later took part in the Jewish underground in Palestine until Israel was established in 1948, when he assumed a number of key military posts. Upon retiring from the service in 1962, Kopp went into business and presided over until 1983, when he was elected Israel's sixth president. He is credited with shaping Israel's image abroad during his 10 years in office.

CONVICTED: Former **Minister of Health** and **Patrick Macdonald**, 62, of the Conservative Party, was found guilty of a charge of sexual assault. In a stunning verdict, **Judge Patrick Wain** said that Macdonald had "intended to seduce and seduce" to avoid sentencing nearly \$300,000 in unpaid taxes that he owes Revenue Canada.

DIED: The first female Speaker of the Senate, **Marion Macdonald Ferguson**, 97, at her home in Fredericton.

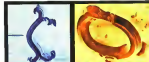
DIED: **Norm Macdonald**, 70, president of Trent University from 1972 to 1979, at his home in Peterborough, Ont.

DIED: Former right-leader **Agustine (Lévy) Dupré**, 92, who in the 1930s was one of the first Canadian-born players in the major leagues, in Montreal, Conn., following a stroke.

DIED: Biologist **George Mead**, 90, who shared the 1967 Nobel Prize in physiology for his research on how the eye sends images to the brain, at his home in Cambridge, Mass.

FILED: A temporary restraining order against actor **Eli Roth**, 40, who won a screening Oscar for his movie *Slingshot* by his fourth wife, **Patricia**, 27, after she filed for divorce.

RECOVERING: Hollywood actor **Arnold Schwarzenegger**, 49, from surgery to correct a congenital heart valve problem, in Los Angeles.



STUNNING SHAPES: Many of the new organic chemicals in solid waste, University of Toronto researchers poured through a microscope and were astonished to find tiny objects with bizarre and beautiful shapes. Chemist Geoffrey Bate said that the discovery—reported in the *Journal of Organic Chemistry*—might be used in semiconductor technology and other super-small objects.

Priming the pump

BY JOHN DeMONT

Sooner or later, somebody had to say it. But it took an old political warrior with nothing left to lose to tell English-speaking Canada the unpleasant truth: no matter how much the politicians talk about job creation and the social safety net, the convergent questions of how to bring Quebec in Canada still hang over the coming federal election. Was a nasty answer close? "The glass is full," the most recent copresident minister at the country's history told 1,000 well-heeled listeners in a downtown Toronto hotel room last week, "in that if Canada's Constitution cannot help guarantee security in the next century, many Quebecers—and I say this with profound regret—would prefer to have have it as an independent state."

Until that moment, national unity was the election issue that dared not speak its name. Brian Mulroney's words seemed almost cathartic; after long months of hyping around the matter, suddenly the political wedge was again talking about "the Quebec Question." The wanted to elect a star, the former prime minister was successful—his speech grabbed headlines during a week in which the government unleashed a startling round of pre-election house cleaning. Within the space of days, Ottawa signed a new agreement giving



best hope for keeping Quebec in Canada. "What in the hell did Mulroney ever do?" sniggered a senior adviser to federal Interprovincial Affairs Minister Stephen Dixon. "We've made real progress."

Up to a point. The Liberals no longer meddle in such areas of provincial jurisdiction as forestry, mining and tourism. The federal government has extended its role, however, in a constitutional change to the country's regions. Just last week, the Chrétien government, at Quebec's request, promised to introduce a constitutional amendment to transform Quebec's religious-based school system into one based on the French and English languages. And a joint Ottawa-Quebec deal on manpower training would sit right around the corner.

Why, then, are the Liberals suddenly besieged by critics on all sides? Last week, Quebec lawyer Guy Bernard filed a brief before the Supreme Court of Canada—where Ottawa has asked for a ruling on the legality of Quebec's separation. Bernard, a former senior cabinet minister, came out swinging not only at nonseparatists but also at the federal government, saying a tougher stance against separatism. Even worse, many politicians and commentators

The unity debate intrudes on the Liberals' efforts to clean house



Chrétien and Clark (left), Mulroney and Brian Mulroney: election fever and a family question

term needed agreement when Mulroney blasted Chrétien for failing to demonstrate that the Liberals had a concrete game plan for dealing with the issue of Quebec. "Where in the federalist message?" asked Saskatchewan Premier Roy Romanow.

The response was reassuringly silent. Faced with the possibility of defeat in the Oct. 30, 1995, referendum on Quebec sovereignty, a desperate Chrétien promised to meet the province's constitutional demands. Empty words so far as words are. But the referendum did manage to push a national resolution through the House of Commons recognizing the distinct nature of Quebec—which allowed Chrétien to sidestep the issue while claiming to have lived up to his word. Even if, as some predict, the party's election platform includes a promise to enshrine a distinct society clause in the Constitution, the matter depends on provincial co-operation.

So far, Don has outstepped a few pretensions to unanimity support a distinct society clause—among them New Brunswick's Frank McKenna and Newfoundland's Brian Tobin. But British Columbia Premier Glen Clark says no. Ontario's Mike Harris, who turned down Chrétien in person after the Prime Minister asked him, three days after the referendum, to support a distinct society clause, does not even want to talk about the issue. The most Alberta's Ralph

Abel says no. Mulroney's response was also silent. Mulroney's silence was not a choice. He had to show him and the Prime Minister side by side during last January's Team Canada trade mission to Asia—and imply that a unified Canada can co-exist in function well. As a result, he is determined to play a role in the campaign—and inevitably his presence would automatically thrust the national unity issue into the spotlight.

Quebec's Clark, playing the unity card is also caught with his hands tied. The polls show that while Canadians are becoming more of the centrist debate, they still lean far to the country's left. But the Western-based Reform party will be trying to win new votes and solidify old ones by warning that opposing Quebec is a vote for any government. Reform would love to beat up the national unity debate, since it would enable them to label the Liberals and Tories as old-fashioned enemies to Quebec. "I haven't talked to anyone who would agree that distinct society should be on the table," said B.C. Reform MP Jim Hart. "It is not something Westerners will support."

But the Liberals are not the only ones haunted by the Quebec question. Tony Leites, Jean Chrétien's federal politician with the most credibility within Quebec, was offered to be a vice premier. He may enjoy. Although his party supports distinct society, the Tories want to distance themselves as much as possible from Mulroney, who once failed to put together a constitutional package that would

Klein seems willing to concede is that he will consider an amendment that does not confer any special status on Quebec. Even then, under Alberta law, any constitutional proposal would have to be passed by referendum—in a province where distrust of society has always been highly unpopular. Another critical provincial player—Manitoba Premier Justin Braaten—has always rejected outright the idea of participating in another round of constitutional talks.

No wonder the Liberals are so reluctant to reopen the question. Party strategists do not want the country reminded of Quebec's handling of the referendum, which many critics say allowed Quebec to come within a razor's edge of voting for separation. Letting national unity dominate the campaign in Quebec, where the Grés has made its home, and where Chrétien is generally seen as a tough negotiator, would be an unmitigated disaster. As Jean-Marie Lévesque, head of the Montreal-based polling firm Lévesque & Lévesque Inc., puts it, "If the Liberals can keep the economy, where the government is strong, at the center of the campaign, they will perform well. But if the campaign takes place on the constitutional terrain, the Liberals are in trouble."

Ironically, analysts say the separation issue Quebecers would also prefer not to be drawn into a constitutional debate that involves the question of renewing the Canadian federation. But a easy house



CANADA

in the country. That means underplaying the issue and, especially, their own role for a distinct society clause, which was the main feature of Mulroney's failed Meech Lake accord. "There is no one who really wants to deal with it, even in Quebec," Charvet conceded. But, he added, "in the end, Canadians do expect their national leaders to reach this issue."

Last week, Charvet and his Liberals had no major answers for the angry question. They did, however, manage to solve a host of long-running problems from coast to coast—and the announcements seemed to over-pleas to politics. At issue in part was the new West Coast fishery deal, which gives co-management rights to British Columbia and includes a joint conservation fund of \$30 million over three years to restore salmon habitat. Charvet and Clark trumpeted the agreement as proof that federalism can work and that Ottawa and the provinces can get along. But critics immediately pointed out that the deal clearly served another purpose: For Clark, whose popularity has plummeted since taking office, it gave him an opportunity to demonstrate that he can play hard ball with Ottawa. For Charvet, whose party currently holds only one of 32 seats in British Columbia, it was a chance to carry favor on the West Coast—and show that he is attentive to the province's needs.

On the East Coast, where the 1992 marston in the cod fishery has devastated the local economy, the good news from Ottawa also sounded like blatant electioneering. Since last October, when the Fisheries Resource Conservation Council recommended that a limited catch be allowed in the south arm region, Fisheries Minister Fred Martin has been under intense pressure in his home province of Newfoundland to let fishermen go back to catching their nets. While many independent scientists caution the wisdom of reopening the cod fishery as even a limited basis—arguing that the stocks were off too small to sustain it—fishermen along New Brunswick's northern coast called the move long overdue. But many still insist that the timing of Meech's announcement was likely tied to the upcoming federal election. "They're probably throwing a plan to us," shrugged Earl Johnson, 46, of North Harbor, Nfld., who has fished in the area for nearly 30 years, "hoping that we'll see it as their gift."

That, of course, is one of the benefits of power. Charvet, who was in a pre-election swing through Atlantic Canada last week, dismissed the timing of the announcement as a transparent grab for votes. "There couldn't be a better confirmation that there's no election on the way," he said to an audience with *Monde's* *L'Express*, of course, it was the way a few words by a skilled former prime minister managed to galvanize the country's political parties.

With *L'Express* in Ottawa, ARNOLD ARNOLD, in Montreal and DANIEL BERNARDIN in Quebec

'English in its place'

In Quebec's anglophone circles, it seems that as soon as one language controversy ends, another erupts.

The latest dispute occurred after the joint administration of the Royal Victoria and Montreal General hospitals sent staff a work-mail directive on April 17 advising them to address patients in French first, and to begin their voice mail messages in French. The hospi-

"We can't afford to lose any more."

Quebec's sour post-referendum mood has not improved since Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard's conciliatory speech to anglophones at Montreal's Centre Theatre in 1996. At the time, some anglophones questioned the premier's sincerity, only now say that Bouchard showed his true stripes last February when he publicly blamed "radicals" in the anglophone community for its poor relations with the Parti Québécois government. But Michael Hines, president of the anglophone-rights group Alliance Québec, suggests that, on the contrary, language disputes continue to fester because Bouchard believes he must placate hard men within the Parti Québécois. There are, Hines says, many reasons for anglophones to be concerned—among them, the PQ government's plan to bring back the so-called language policy to ensure adherence to the province's laws. "At every turn," he says, "the linguistic policy of the Quebec government has been very clear about putting the English language in its place."

He cites as an example a directive in November to Quebec civil servants discouraging the use of English when dealing with the public.

Others, though, say anglophone anger is overblown. Laval University political scientist Louis Berthiaume believes that the linguistic situation in Montreal is better now than it was a decade ago, even though "the reactions have never been as strong as they are today." Leaders in the anglophone community are motivated by an agenda that goes beyond protesting anglophone rights, he claims. "They want to weaken the Quebec government by all means possible," Berthiaume argues. That includes trying to make a case that, in the event of Quebec sovereignty, partition of the province would be a justifiable way to protect the anglophone community. "All this to me has one target," he says, "to destabilize a provincial government that will call a referendum in a few years." Quebec's questions over language, it seems, are still far from over.

RENEA BARNWELL, in Montreal



Anglophone-rights protest in Montreal, anger

ties, which have bilingual status but are widely viewed as anglophone institutions, issued the directive after receiving complaints from a few patients about inadequate French language services. But what the hospitals considered a courtesy, some anglophones viewed as an affront. This hospital then issued a statement pointing out that the French-first guideline has been in place for years and that both languages should be used when first greeting a patient. But some anglophones remained angry, complaining that the hospitals' advice only served to exude the position of a group already under siege. "We're not as much of an visibility in Montreal," said English rights activist Howard Gagliano, who organized a protest outside the Royal Victoria late last week.



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CANADA Red River rising Manitobans brace for severe spring flooding

On a rainy, raw spring afternoon, two 12-year-old schoolgirls stood on a concrete promenade at the Forks National Historic Site in downtown Winnipeg. After examining the plaques at the base of a pillar, they let their eyes roam upward, high over the head, too bold of browns that marked the crest of the epic flood that inundated Manitoba in 1886. Their shocked reaction is typical of those who have never witnessed a great flood of the Red River. "It's hard to believe when you're here," says Taylor McMillan to her friend Celine. "We're standing on the bottom of it now." They may soon have more than monuments to educate them. For weeks, if not for months, Manitoba has been bracing for the river and warning Manitobans to prepare for the worst. And while the anticipated deluge is unlikely to match the proportions of the 1886 flood, forecasters appear united on one point: it will be bad.

South of the border, 100-year-old high-water records were surpassed April 17 as the annual breakup of the Red River in Fargo, N.D., resulted in massive flooding. And last week, residents evacuated Grand Forks, N.D.—only 300 km from Winnipeg—when floodwaters burst the city's clay dikes. Even if Manitoba recovers the good spring weather that has been predicted, the southern part of the province is unlikely to escape unscathed when the river arrives at the end of this month. Two years of heavy precipitation logged into the water table and a rock-hard loess layer in the ground mean that the earth will be unable to absorb much of the spring runoff. This year, there will be more of it than usual, adding to Manitoba's woes was an early-April blizzard, which dumped an additional 58 cm of heavy snow on top of a record-breaking snowpack of as much as 250 cm. Provincial flood co-ordinator Larry Whitney summed up the somber mood among officials. "It's been a long winter. We didn't need this."

History provides potent reminders of the river's first mood. Almost yearly, the Red has threatened to overflow its banks—and Manitobans have fought back. The century's worst



Sandbagging in Winnipeg: 400 only believe are at risk

flood occurred in 1858, when a lake of 1,800 square kilometres covered southern Manitoba, causing \$300 million in damage. Large sections of Winnipeg were submerged, and the government considered evacuating the entire city. According to Whitney, this year's impending flood may be larger still. "Right now, we're looking at a better-than-even chance that this flood will exceed 1858," he says. "Thank God we've got the Floodway."

The Red River Floodway is a 47 km-long ditch designed to channel floodwaters around Winnipeg. Completed in 1983, it was, at the time, the second-largest earthmoving project in history, after the Panama Canal. With its enormous \$65-million price tag, it was scornfully labelled "Duff's Ditch," after its controversial champion, then-prime minister Duff Roblin. But Whitney says the Floodway has paid for itself many times over. "Just one alone," he adds, "we estimate that the Floodway saved the city of Winnipeg \$1 billion in flood damage."

Still, about 400 homes within the city are in danger, and along stretchy remote roads, homeowners and volunteers are shoring

up backyard dikes with a 60-cm-high berm of mudbags. North of the city, commercial fishermen armed with power augers have drilled 40,000 holes into the river ice. Some officials refer to this as the "Swiss cheese compartment," and hope that the perforated surface may break up early instead of crumpling into thick ice jams that typically exacerbate flooding. The province also used a helicopter to drop drag lines on the ice—flooding that it will lessen the break-up by shearing the surface loose.

The continual threat of flooding has brought out the inventiveness of some Manitobans. On a highway south of Winnipeg, contractor Guy Bergeron, 60, owns a 2,000-kg machine that resembles a metal spider—his own contribution to Manitoba's long-standing battle with the Red River. "We call it the Sandbagger," he says. "I switched people, year after year. It's a good machine by hand, and thought, 'There has to be a better way.'"

Bergeron designed the Sandbagger at his kitchen table while recovering from open-heart surgery in 1992. The finished product uses a conveyor belt and rotating tank to distribute sand in 50 cm layers into bags. The result: 90 mudbags per minute.

The City of Winnipeg bought one of the machines in 1994 for \$17,500. "We've now got two of them, and so far this year we've produced a million sandbags," says city official Eddy Kijarska. "We're planning to fill 25 million before we're done." Unsurprisingly, Winnipeg, the city of St. Grand Forks, N.D., has purchased two Sandbaggers to fight its own battle with the Red. "A crew from CNN flew up to do a story on the machine," says Bergeron proudly.

Meanwhile, as the Red River cracks its icy shell in its inexorable push northward, it has taken eight lives and caused millions of dollars in damage. At the end of April, a 23-cm-high surge is expected to surge at the border into Manitoba and sweep around the five-kilometre town of Emerson and Morden. The crest is expected to arrive in Winnipeg in early May, but if the weather and the Floodway hold, the city may be strong the heaviest once along the river's course.

Whichever captures the Red vanguard in the coming weeks, it is capable of much worse. Even after the schoolgirls' heads at the Forks, the 1886 flooding serves as a chilling reminder of what Whitney calls "the mother of all floods." According to climatologists, a flood of that magnitude may occur only once every 600 years. But when it does, nothing will keep the city dry. In 1826, Sir George Simpson, governor of the Hudson's Bay Co., surveyed the old city 90-km-long lake that narrowed the plains and bitterly concluded that such a flood was an "eternally recurring" event. "It is a terrible thing," he wrote. "It is a terrible thing."

JAKE MACDONALD in Winnipeg



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COVER

THE NURSES

BY SHARON DOYLE
DRIEDGER

It is the worst possible time for the cell phone batteries to die. The messages blaring out of the emergency room intercom demand a response: "Ambulance on the way"—traffic accident victim Chance nurse cell charge re-activating car accident. Janet Spence, the registered nurse running the emergency room at the new Halifax Infirmary, presses and re-presses the buttons on her cell phone. Dead. A paramedic steps forward to help, and the look means it takes him to fix her phone. Spence surveys the hectic scene, assessing the priority of cases in the 28 beds and the pressures facing the 19 bedside nurses. "Over there we have three sick cardiac patients—they all need to be seen as soon as possible," she says, a video-scope dangling over the white jacket that only partly covers her pink sweat suit. "And there's an overdose here. We are full and about to overflow."

Twenty minutes later, Spence receives another alert: "The police just brought in somebody with sexual assault, which means you get a nurse and a doctor with double evidence," she groans. "I could take two hours—we can't take a nurse and a doctor out of this mess now." When Spence discovers that a physician has cleared a patient for discharge, she pushes an incoming patient—clumped in a wheelchair—towards the bed. There is a moment of confusion when the pink curtain is drawn back to reveal a prefrilled woman, surprised to hear about the doctor's decision. "I thought she was being admitted," says her young companion. But nurse Gloria Keys—who has been busy with three critically ill patients—confirms she is to go home. "Sixteen years ago, when I started, nurses had time to spend at the bedside," she says wistfully as she checks on the other three. "Now they just get basic care. We're running all the time—nursing has gone to hell."

That was the frantic scene one recent night at the Halifax Infirmary, part of the large Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre complex. Ventricles are all played out at hospitals across Canada



The front-line care-givers are burned out. Is it any wonder?

every day. Nurses—the front-line care-givers in Canada's beleaguered health system—are burning out. "Burning is in crisis," says Heather Benford, president of the Nova Scotia Nurses Union. "Workloads are increasing and patients are sicker. Nurses are starting to be very worried that they cannot provide care to all their patients in a safe way."

Frustration, fatigue and anger are common among Canada's

■ IWK Grace special-care nurse Marlene Powers, Esq. (far left), MacDougall and Ernst. I was going to save everybody!

263,400 registered nurses. "Enough is enough," states Rachel Reed, Montreal-based president of the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA). "We've gone far enough in terms of reduction. The health of Canadians is clearly at risk and Canadians have reason to be concerned."

Nurses, and the people who train them, are watching the pressures on the profession with alarm. Thousands of full-time jobs have disappeared in the past few years as hospitals have closed beds, merged or, in some cases, shut down completely (page 18). "Patient care is suffering," says Jim Bluskar, associate dean of nursing at the University of Calgary. "The grassroots-level staff nurse is getting burned out." In Ontario, as many as 15,000 nurses could lose their jobs over the next three years in some hospitals in New Brunswick, Quebec and Nova Scotia, IWK staff has even slipped below agreed-upon essential service levels during a strike.

At the same time, pressures to send patients home earlier mean that those who remain in hospital are in greater need of care. Henderson, 42, is obitician nurse at Halifax's Isaac Walton Kilham Cancer Health Centre, recalls "the good old days" at the start of her career. "If you had night patients, four may have been there for over a week and all the road to recovery, and another four on the first day of post-op," she says. "Now, all your patients are very sick—and you



may have 16." Many doctors express sympathy. "There is no such stress on nurses," says Halifax surgeon Vivian McMaster. "They are working longer hours under less than ideal conditions, many of them casual and part time. Life in hospitals, he adds, "isn't as fun as it's happy" as it used to be.

To take a close look at the pressures besetting nursing, McMaster spent a week observing conditions at two respected Halifax hospitals—the 1,000-bed QE II complex and the 577-bed IWK Grace. Nurses are feeling the crunch of four successive years of staff and funding cutbacks at the QE II, which has merged six facilities into five, including the new infirmary. At the complex's Campbell Veterans' Memorial building, Helen Gill's voice falters as she recalls the early days of her 37-year nursing career. "It was a little moribund," she says, with a hint of a Cape Breton lilt. "When I started here, the nurses wore veils and they were called sisters." Gillis—who only recently stopped wearing a traditional white nurse's cap, feeling suble pressure from the capless majority—thinks the profession has lost some of its spirit. "I mean, a nurse was a role model where you had patients know who you were," she says. "Now they even wear jeans—whereas, but they are jeans." Gillis, who adds disapprovingly, "GHBs, who plans to retire in May, also feels nursing being drawn away from the bedside. "Thank goodness my time as a nurse is behind me, not ahead of me," she says.

Nurses just beginning their careers face enormous changes. Medical technology, health reform, research developments, the Internet, preventive and alternative medicine, a more informed public, feminism, increased education—those are just some of the factors transforming the profession's traditional roles. Today, most nurses—60 per cent—work in hospitals. But hospital jobs are disappearing, and new pressures developing in community health care. Helen Musallam, 77, a widely respected former associate director of the CNA, predicts that hospital nurses will become fewer in number and more highly specialized. She also envisions "augh-terhood nurses" running 24-hour clinics offering a range of services from the diagnosis of simple ailments to medical training and the provision of help. "I see nurses as the leaders of health services in the community," says Musallam.

Azra Swendsen has seen the future—and she is already there. "I was the first one," says the tall redhead, pointing to the "ERN" for Extended Role Nurse—on her nameplate. Swendsen, who has a master of science degree in nursing, is one of a new breed of nurse practitioner, with an expanded role that occasionally overlaps the once-exclusive territory of the doctor. Working in admissions in the Halifax Infirmary's cardiology department, Swendsen takes detailed medical histories of patients and performs "head to toe" physicals as well as a number of procedures, including cardiac catheterization. A large part of her job is patient education and follow-up, to encourage a healthy lifestyle. "It is well documented in the literature that patients are more comfortable talking to a nurse," says Swendsen. "They feel like they are waiting a doctor's time or the doctor takes over their head."

Swendsen is several provinces ahead, informally enhancing the roles of nurses to save specialists through pilot projects, without waiting for new licensing legislation. Nova Scotia formalized its licensing only this month. Marilyn Bacon, vice-president of nursing at IWK,

Grace, wears the newly received announcement from the Registered Nurses Association of Nova Scotia.

Like a victory flag, "This represents four years of work," she says. But even RNAs who do not take the practitioner route are finding successes doing jobs they never dreamed of. "Technology has changed my life as a nurse," says Philip MacDougall, squinting to adjust one of a dozen electronic pumps at the bedside of an elderly patient undergoing a bone marrow transplant for advanced cancer. That patient, he explains later, is on a continuous morphine drip for sores in his mouth. "It's extraordinary pain," he adds. "After the job is done, I feel like I've won a new way of life." MacDougall is a technical aide, handling intricate computerized instruments. He also provides information and counselling to newly ill patients and their worried families—in a ward where death is almost a daily event. And he crumples vitals, mops the floor and bolsters patients—on dedicated nursing units that are now a source of conflict and controversy.

Increasingly, hospital administrators are hiring not just less fully trained Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) but also unregulated, less-skilled and considerably lower-paid personal-care workers to carry out "nonnursing" duties. "What, then, is the role of the nurse? How would someone with a BSc in nursing do what I do?" asks BWN Grace who says that "mopping a floor is definitely not nursing." Still, some "nonnursing" jobs are important in the "art" of nursing, she adds. "You can learn a lot about a patient and their situation when you are taking away a bedpan or doing a bath," Miller says. Others are happy to be relieved of the basic tasks. "I am a degree-educated nurse," says Jill Yates, a cardiologist nurse at the Halifax Infirmary. "I don't need a degree to put a patient in a chair room, empty the chart or wash or clean up." Clara Power, vice-president of nursing at the QE II, says the hospital is considering hiring people to do some non-nursing chores. While acknowledging that basic tasks may provide insight into a patient's health, she adds: "Can't we find a way to do that assessment in five minutes, instead of the 25 minutes it takes to do a bed bath?"

In fact, nurses interact with patients in many ways. During a long shift at the military emergency room, Carolé Daubois greets with a critically ill patient. "She smiled," Daubois says later with a broad grin. "I said the Our Father, the whole thing." On the same day, in an operating room at the eleventh floor of the Victoria General—another part of the QE II complex—nurse Michelle Singer takes time out from setting up the instruments for an operation to comfort a frightened patient until the anesthesia takes effect. "The bedline line is, the patient is scared and they need you," says Singer. "The day this job becomes all technique is the day I have to stop."

Time of any kind is at a premium. In the post-partum unit at BWN Grace, the alarm sounds in the morning station shortly after 10 a.m. Nurse Debbie Trimper races down the hall towards the door with the flashing red light, joining a nurse who arrived seconds earlier. A pale young mother looks relieved—her infant, born only a few hours earlier, is fine. "Crying baby," explains Trimper, who has seen it all—and seen it all change—in her 23 years as a maternity nurse. Now mothers and babies room together for their short hospital stays—generally only 34 hours, compared with nearly a week just a decade ago.

And while Trimper cares for fewer mothers, their needs, in the immediate aftermath of childbirth, are great. "It's frustrating part is that sometimes two months feed you at once," she says. "It's a question of who feeds you the most." For one mother, leaving against a corridor wall clutching her hungry baby, it means waiting a little longer for help with breastfeeding. "I'll be there as

'Thank goodness my time as a nurse is not ahead of me'

soon as I can." Trimper assures her. "Oh, I know, you're busy with patients," the tired mother says. Source of the stresses of nursing are unrelenting. Paula Ernst remembers her first week in the bone marrow transplant unit of QE II's Victoria General building six years ago. "When I came out of nursing school, I was going to save everybody," she says. "I started off at a time when everyone was dying, two one day, three the next. I had a couple of drinks at a party that weekend and I burst into tears. It all came out. Nearly everybody died on BMT. Then I learned that part of the job is to help people die."

Another part of the role of patient educators. In what many perceive as a challenging health-care system, nurses are convinced it is a more important function than ever. "It's up to the nurse to speak up," says operating room nurse Carol St. Clair. An outpatient 40-year-old who believes it is her duty to act as role model. "Trimmer nurses are 'laid' about assuming that mothers—the doctors are the age of their fathers. But in OR, we watch their competence." All hospitals have prebion and St. Clair says it is important to deal with them. "Doctors are not gods," she says. "Some have their addictions and their weaknesses."

BWN Grace's Miller believes that, for the most part, the relationship between nurses and physicians has improved, since she began her career nearly 30 years ago. "In the early days, there was a lot of respect between doctors and nurses," says Miller. "But there was a very clear understanding of what their roles were—the doctor was at the top of the heap and the nurses' role was largely what the doc-



Trimper carries with newborn and mother: 'A good-end job'

tor left for them to do." Now, nurses are more aware of their responsibilities as licensed practitioners. "We don't always agree with a doctor," notes Daubois, who says that in crisis, she will "check it out" and ask the physician to "clarify" an order. "I'm not a 'chatter' she adds. "I'm a nurse, God help me."

People take up the calling for a variety of reasons. MacDougall did it because he wanted to travel. "It was the '80s, you could go anywhere and immediately get a job," he recalls. But now, MacDougall plans to stay put, because "you just don't get permanent jobs any more." Job security has become a major concern. "You have a specialty like this under your belt," says Singer, an experienced operating room nurse. "You have a much better chance of getting a job." But even then, possibly not a lucrative job with benefits. "In many hospitals across Canada, the trend is to hire casual nurses," says union leader Brenda Scott. Some nurses say they like the flexibility of casual work. "It runs on just time," says operating room specialist Monte Hansen, who plans to return to university part time next fall.

While jobs disappear, many nurses, lured by active recruiting, are leaving Canada for full-time positions with higher pay and better benefits in the United States and abroad. Joanne Moser leaves next month for South Africa on a five-year contract that will not net her more than \$80,000 a year—more than an experienced general duty nurse might expect to earn before taxes in Nova Scotia. "I love my job," says Moser, an operating room nurse at the Victoria. "But the salary is only enough to go to psycho to psycho." Meanwhile, Donna Miller has just spent eight years working as a travelling nurse in the United States, where she enjoyed good money and benefits. But she returned to Canada because U.S. patient care was not as good, she says. "Bed nurses are common there," Miller recounts. "Patients may have to wait up to two days in emergency wards. They bring in food, blankets."

While job prospects dwindle, RNs will soon require more extensive training. More than 80 per cent of nurses currently practicing

work in an institution," says Trimper. But others, like Ruth Egan, who works with MacDougall in the bone marrow unit, see little point in taking nursing courses for advance study. "I've done 'There are no jobs.' And the financial reward is slim. In Nova Scotia, nurses with degrees earn a premium of just \$25 a month."

Nurses acknowledge—in fact, they boast about—the "stick sense of humor" that helps them deal with trauma. It may assure them, then, in the midst of job shortages, to see that some planners are predicting a shortage of nurses in just five years. That is because high care employment, low wages and higher education requirements are creating a barrier to entry for many young people from entering the profession. Governments, in turn, are planning to reduce class sizes in nursing schools. At Nova Scotia's health department official Mary Jane Hampton puts it. "Why quit the market when you can't get in? It's already there when you are unemployed."

Meanwhile, as the number of nurses needed in hospitals shrinks, long-promised community and home-care nursing jobs have not—and may never—materialize. "One of the greatest gaps in health care," says Hampton, "is that jobs lost to unemployment are picked up in the community." Still, many nurses agree that although their profession is aging, it is far from dead. There is a lot of growing emphasis on health promotion and community-based nursing, notes Dalhousie's Tomblin-Murphy—"what nurses have been advocating for 20 years." And it is a challenge that many of their young students are willing to embrace. Tanya Brown, in her fourth year, is forming a company to offer first-aid courses to parents and day-care workers. She calls herself a "nurse entrepreneur" and she may be helping to define the nurse of the 21st century.

Is the current crisis in nursing affecting the care you or a family member has received? Post your view in the *The Work* section of the Maclean's Forum (www.macleans.ca/macleans).

WHERE CANADA'S NURSES WORK



SOURCE: CANADIAN NURSES ASSOCIATION
MAY 1997 (BASED ON 1995)

WHEN A HOSPITAL DIES

Emotions run high as the 107-year-old Calgary General closes

BY DALE FISHER

God bless this hospital!

—Message left on the wall of an abandoned ward at Calgary General's Bow Valley Centre

For more than a century, the "grand old lady," as it was widely known, presided over the city like a doting grandmother. The Calgary General Hospital nursed the sick to health, welcomed babies into the world, cared for the frail and elderly, comforted the dying. Annual reports from the early years list scores of donations that sustained a frugal institution—everything from linen and jars of marmalade to eggs and live chickens. Over the years, it grew into a massive 600-bed complex with a national reputation for excellence. To Calgarians, it was still "the General," even after 1989, when it was officially renamed the Bow Valley Centre of the Calgary General Hospital. That close relationship between a city and an institution ended last week as the lights went out on what remained of the General's acute-care wards, including a slow, painful and very public death.

As the field of health care restructuring rumbles across Canada, the General's demise is not only an emotional end to an era for Calgarians but also a glimpse into the health-care future of a nation. The fiscal conservatism of the 1990s has turned hospitals from public sacred cows into fatted calves on the altar of balanced budgets. The role and even the need for many venerable institutions has become uncertain as advances in technology reduced patients' length of stay for many procedures—to some cases forming what's a few years ago was a week in hospital into outpatient surgery. "There's no question that in a different era for public health-care policy," says University of Alberta health economist Richard Paine. "The delivery of health care has changed and we don't need as many hospital beds as we once did."

Natal of the closures and rationalizations, the Calgary General is unique in two respects. It is the biggest North American hospital ever to shut down and hire its functions, equipment, staff and patients integrated into existing hospitals, and it closes down Calgary as the only large city in Canada without a downtown emergency department. There was really no choice, says Bud McCreig, chairman of the Calgary Regional Health Authority, which ordered the closure in 1994. Provincial funding for the city's hospitals had dropped from \$730 million to \$602 million between 1993-1994 and 1995-1996. The much newer 500-bed Peter Lougheed Centre, another part of the Calgary General system just nine kilometers away, was operating at only one-third capacity. "We saw it as an opportunity to build a better system at lower cost," says McCreig.

But for many Calgarians, particularly the General's staff members, the closure has been a wrenching experience. On Oct. 28, the 58-bed prenatal medicine ward, named Jo-Anne Crossman in memory to help turn a patient. Often the work isn't glamorous, she says, but it serves personal bonds that come with working together in often stressful

conditions. "What happens," she adds, "are the TV soaps that show nurses as pretty, gorgeous and always bathing their eyes at the doctor. It is a tough job, physically and emotionally." As she talks, nurses scurry from room to room, dispensing medication, bathing patients, preparing care for physiotherapy and teaching another care to deal with the newly diagnosed diabetic. "A hospital is a unique place," says Crossman. "You have to work on one and know how strong the bonds and the feelings are to appreciate why it hurts to see it all taken away."

During the final months of the shutdown process, Macdonald joined special access to the unfolding drama of politics and personalities, eyes and money—all rolled into the debate over the future of health care. A diary of the closing of Bow Valley.

FEB. 13, TUESDAY: THE SURGERY CRISIS The critical-care planning group meets, as it does at this hour every second Thursday. Regional administrators are joined by doctors and nurses from the 600-bed ranks of patient care, drawn into a project they have come to accept with resignation. Their task is to ensure that the most sensi-



Closing emergency. While leaving the General (above), a grassroots protest could not save an institution



tive parts of Calgary's oldest hospital—the intensive-care and emergency units—are moved efficiently and safely to the Lougheed Centre. After that, the other services will simply follow—to the suburban Lougheed, Foothills and Rockyview hospitals, which are receiving \$65 million in new capital development funding—and the General will die.

"To put a hospital together properly somewhere else, you have to take it apart properly," observes Barry Kowalsky, an architect by training and head of the three-member group managing the closures. Along with senior staffers Janice Hutschler and Ferni Keshajee, he is directing an intricate chess game involving more than 2,000 people. In charge of organizing the physical transfer, which would require the help of three moving companies, is Suzanne Bennett, a former physician officer with the Canadian armed forces who once closed down and moved a radio station in northern Quebec. "I figure if I can move trucks, radio and weapons," he can move bedrads and medical equipment," says Bennett.

The rushing runs smoothly until intensive-care head nurse Mary White raises concerns about a seven-day period when the new ICU unit will be operational at the Lougheed, but general surgery will not be available there. "We must have surgery backup in case of an emergency," she insists. Hutschler tells White that ICU patients needing emergency surgery would go by ambulance to another hospital, under a plan approved by a city-wide committee of surgeons. "That's what we do now in some cases," Hutschler says. But White is not convinced. "We don't transfer those kinds of patients," she says. "We transfer stable ones. We talking about a patient who's crashing."

This is Kowalsky's worst nightmare. Finally, he admits to sleepless nights, worrying that something might go wrong. Dark circles around his eyes attest to his anxiety that a patient might suffer, perhaps die, if the closure of the hospital and transfer of patients does not unfold perfectly. "There is no room for error," he says.

The emergency service presents unique problems. The loss of emergency services in downtown Calgary is an emotional touch point not only for the public but for staff as well. The General's emergency is being moved to the Lougheed to upgrade that hospital's part-time "urgent care" ward into a full-scale, 24-hour emergency service. But unlike ICU, where a rural and urban staff are being moved into to create a new site where none previously existed, the General's emergency personnel are being merged with urgent-care staff at the Lougheed. Denise Kelly, executive head nurse, says staff at the Lougheed have been unhappy. "People say they're being forced on us," she reports. "It is very difficult to facilitate any team-building."

FEB. 13, 12-40 A.M.: THE NURSE CRISIS After the meeting, Kowalsky, Keshajee and Hutschler move to the "war room," a stuffy, windowless room where they do most of their planning. The disagreement the surgery issue must be addressed. Then they are joined by the eight other members of the overall planning support group. Because of growing staff tension, human resources manager Wendy Griffin says it is exacerbated by the threat of a province-wide strike by nurses, who are demanding a return of money lost in a salary rollback three years ago. Sick leave is on the rise, some nurses are retiring overseas—and then there are the personality problems. "We've got some

times," says Griffin, "saying they won't move and work for a certain manager because she's a bitch."

The strike doesn't diminish the health-care stakes in the campaign for a March 11 provincial election called two days earlier by Conservative Premier Ralph Klein. But it also poses a serious threat to months of planning for closing the General. Outside, a massive crowd of about 130 gathers in front of the hospital for the opening of the Liberal Calgary campaign Party leader Grant Mitchell says a Liberal government would keep the General open, but few are taking the opposition party seriously—polls show Klein's Tories leading for a massive majority.

FEB. 19: THE MASS LOUING Tensions are high. So high, in fact, that despite a previous understanding Macleod's closed area is to be a quiet meeting dealing with White's concerns about the lack of surgery backup. Behind closed doors, crisis change. "It was pretty dicey," *Rockyview* reporter after the 90-minute meeting. "Mostly, it was a clash of egos, which is not uncommon when you put professionals together. But once we got beyond that, everyone agreed that surgery would have to be available when emergency and intensive care moves to the Laughed." The plan is for a MARCH-style unit, with emergency in a call for any emergency. "It's a solution we can live with," says White.

FEB. 20: THE ONE-HOUR CAMPAIGN Retired midwife Dr. Harold Swanson, who spent much of his career at the General, is running as a Liberal against Klein in his Calgary Elbow constituency. Swanson passionately opposes the hospital's closure and believes the creation of power for regional health with emphasis a step towards U.S.-style medicine. Emerging from his mud-splattered Jeep after a morning of door-knocking, Swanson has the look of a man in a mission. The hospital's demise, he argues, is driven by senior officials in the Calgary Regional Health Authority, many of whom came from management and medical risks of the relatively new 744-bed Foothills Medical Centre, established in the late

COVER

1990s. "The Foothills was always jealous of the work done by and the reputation of the General," he says.

But Jennifer Pick, chief operating officer, acute care, for the regional health authority, flatly dismisses any suggestion that equality of care will suffer. In fact, she predicts the opposite—that consolidating specialized services, such as major trauma at the Foothills, will improve quality. "It's better to do highly specialized services at one site," says Pick. "When you increase the number of cases, the more you do and the better the staff becomes at doing it."

FEB. 27: THE STRIKE IMPACT The escalating threat of a nurses' strike has all but overwhelmed the process as the planning support team gathers over a sandwich lunch in the war room. The consensus is that March 7 is the most likely date for a strike to begin because the nurses want to maintain pressure on the Klein government to lock the election. There is speculation that other unions would reduce to



Nurses at the hospital in the '90s: a tough job, physically and emotionally

November, 1973: Capacity reaches 960 beds with opening of Centennial Wing, including Canada's first dedicated psychiatric unit in a general hospital.
July, 1987: Western Canada's first trauma service, fully paid open, allowing speedy delivery of emergency patients.
July, 1988: The new 1000-bed capacity Peter Lougheed Centre opens in northeast Calgary and becomes part of the Calgary General Hospital. The downtown site is renamed The Bow Valley Centre of the Calgary General.
January to April, 1994: Reports propose major hospital restructuring including the

closure of the Bow Valley Centre.

June, 1994: As provincial funding decreases, the Klein government establishes the Calgary Regional Health Authority to rationalize operations of the city's seven hospitals.

July, 1994: Authority says it will close Bow Valley and two smaller hospitals close to downtown, Holy Cross and Grace, and reduce the total number of beds in the city from 2,700 to 1,215.

April 7 to 10, 1997: Bow Valley's intensive care, emergency and all remaining inpatient acute-care services moved to other hospitals. Last remaining patients—in a chronic-care mental ward—and residual outpatient services to leave before the end of June.



Kathy at the Laughed: Having is adapt quickly to a new set

the General. Not surprisingly, a poll of neighborhood residents has found more than 90 per cent strongly opposing the closure. But privately, Jim Webster, community association board member and founding member of the committee, is holding out little hope. "They're going to move money around the other hospitals, there is no going back," he confides.

MARCH 11: THE \$1.200 CHECK Eight people gather in a dry, cluttered house across the street from the hospital for the weekly 7 p.m. meeting of the Keep the General Committee. With five days until the election, everything seems wrong. The plan is to hold a save-the-hospital rally that night outside the local Calgary Mountain View riding's all-candidates forum. But the forum has been cancelled due to lack of interest. Committee members decide to go ahead with their rally anyway, but they are not sure how to distribute 100,000 flyers they have had printed, calling on voters to support candidates who oppose the hospital's closure. It will cost \$1,200 to distribute, but the committee has only \$500. Webster, a software developer at company administration, comes to the rescue with a personal cheque for \$1,200.

The General is the biggest hospital ever to shut down in North America

ones United Nurses of Alberta picket lines. "If we're in a strike situation, all bets are off," says Keshayee, thinking of the carefully planned closure schedule.

Montreal, meanwhile, is at a new low. Arriving late after consecutive 30-minute sessions with rehab staff, personnel co-ordinator Norman Landon says: "Now I need rehab." Asked to name the pressure points with staff, she answers: "Take your pick." Nurses have been living with a 10-per-cent wage cut, salary freeze and reduced staffing levels for three years. But beyond that, they and the support staff feel threatened by the closure, even though there will be few layoffs, if any. Kathy Bowman, president of the nurses' union local, agrees. "There is this sense

that we're being sold out," she says. "We're not sure how to distribute 100,000 flyers they have had printed, calling on voters to support candidates who oppose the hospital's closure. It will cost \$1,200 to distribute, but the committee has only \$500. Webster, a software developer at company administration, comes to the rescue with a personal cheque for \$1,200."

MARCH 11: THE FINAL STRAW Klein and the Conservative rise to a landslide victory. Adding insult to injury for those fighting the closure, the Tories easily win Calgary Mountain View. Across town, Swanson narrowly reduces Klein's margin in Calgary Elbow, but there is no mandate victory in either riding. "There's no mandate," Swanson says in his somber campaign room as the outcome becomes obvious. There will be no say of election for the General. The first night word to move will be near-rehab, starting a month-long chain reaction. One two-nighting patient, who decides to give her name, smiles as she stands down the hall on crutches. She will be going home. "Not good," she says before the word choice, she says, but she wonders about the move. Having spent time at both Bow Valley and Foothills, she says Bow Valley has "much better" physical equipment and facilities. "It's too bad they're closing it," she says. "I know the nurses and staff are pretty upset."

MARCH 13: 'EVERYONE FEELS EDEY' A HOST OF ANGE, exasperation and sadness are within Joe-Anne Crossman. Acting as change nurse on G1, she directs traffic on the ward from the central desk. "We work with certain individuals for years, people you can count on, and all of a sudden it's being ripped apart,"

LIFE AND DEATH OF AN INSTITUTION

November, 1899: Eight-bed Calgary General Hospital opens in a two-story bungalow house.

May, 1895: New hospital opens with 600 beds for 35 patients, including private wards, running water and electric lights.

February, 1910: Hospital relocates to current site near Bow River. New beds and facilities building has 160 beds. Bed rates: \$1 in general ward, \$1.50 for university and \$3 to \$5 for private ward.

April, 1912: Dr. Rosemund Luszczek, sister of famous Stephen Luszczek, appointed to run newly created department of pathology.

1918-1919: Hospital overflows with patients during Spanish flu epidemic.

1930-1935: As height of the Depression, the General offers free room for patients in need. Staff salaries cut to help pay bills.

1963-1964: New 526-bed care building, nurses' residence and school of nursing built.

February, 1952: Eight-story rehabilitation wing opens.

The original building: a century of care



Calgary's Hospitals Open and Closed



HOSPITAL-FREE ZONE

she says. "It's emotionally upsetting and very stressful." Unlike some units that will remain intact, C8 is being absorbed into two wards at the Loughheed, a situation that is creating anxiety among staff. With just a month to go before the move, the nurses have not been given a firm date for the transition. "Everyone feels edge," says Cressman.

MARCH 15: THE PLASTERING STARTS The transfer of 16 patients begins inauspiciously on a Saturday. Of the 16 patients in the neurological rehab unit, many suffering from brain injuries, eight are well enough to go home on day passes. Among the six remaining, apprehension grows when transportation fails to arrive as scheduled at 12:30 p.m. At 1 p.m., as they wait in wheelchairs, head nurse Darren McLeod calls patient transporters and learns that, although she booked the same plane that a week earlier and called daily to confirm, it was not entered on the schedule. With the patients clearly flustered and one threatening to call a cab, the manager of transportation is phoned at home and the bus finally arrives at 2:15 p.m. McLeod attributes the glitch to "a breakdown in communications."

When the patients leave 10, she and three other nurses take one last look at the empty unit. After 17 years on neurorehab, McLeod is flooded with emotions as they log off. A few days later, McLeod still feels nostalgic for the Ground, but is pleased with how well she and her staff have been accepted at the Footfalls. "They've made us feel very welcome," she says. "It's gone smoothly."

Neurorehab patient Irene Dawson, 56, has been shifted from one hospital to another three times since being stricken with Guillain-Barre syndrome, a paralyzing neurological disorder, while visiting family in Indiana a year ago. She takes the transfer to the Footfalls in stride. "I think the move went very well because the nurses and staff worked hard to get everything organized," says Dawson, who is slowly making progress and hopes to be sent home by summer.

MARCH 22: THE BIGGEST JOBS Two workers from Toshiba of Canada Ltd. perform the intricate, five-hour task of dismantling the CT scan for its move to the Loughheed. Perhaps nothing symbolizes a modern high-tech hospital more than this computerized, high-speed X-ray machine that provides detailed images of the body, particularly the brain. These machines also straddle a few minutes to observe the operation. "This machine you realize it's all over," sighs one. Easily the largest of the machine's five major pieces is the doughnut-shaped gantry, or supporting frame, filled with intricate computer circuits and weighing 1,600 kg. The same moving company that transported Bow Valley's equally complex magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) system to the Loughheed in November brings in specialized cranes and hoists. The move job, including testing and recalibrating the CT scan at the Loughheed, will take five days.

APRIL 6: THE WAKE FOR CLOSURE At exactly 6 p.m., barricades are placed across the ramp and a sign put in place declaring the General's emergency department closed down. More than 200 staff members enter into the emergency code room—where cautious lives have been saved and lost over the years—for what has been billed as a private wake. Some weep

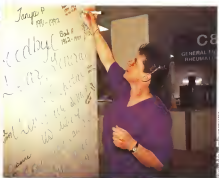
Don Rich is not one to mince words. The success or failure of Calgary's unprecedented decision to close its only downtown hospital and emergency ward will be measured not in dollars saved, he says, but in lives lost. "I shudder to think what's going to happen," says the pneumonic 31-year-old, who spent the past three years working in the high intensity of the General's "Emergency." For months, Rich has been relentless in his public criticism, saying the most vulnerable are being abandoned with the General's closure. "This is an emergency department that handled 50,000 people a year and many of them were the poor street people, ones suffering from mental illness who needed the place," Rich says. "What happens to them?"

It is a question many have been posing since the General's demise was announced in July, 1994, in the name of efficiency. And April 6, all three of Calgary's acute-care emergency wards are in suburban hospitals. The regional health authority that oversees the closure argues that what matters is not how long it takes for a patient to get to an emergency ward, but how quickly emergency medical technicians in an ambulance can get to the scene and stabilize a patient. In Calgary, an ambulance arrives, on average, 3 1/2 minutes after a call is received. But Rich notes that only 20 per cent of the people who sought the hospital from the General's emergency arrived by ambulance. Most turned up on foot or by public transit.

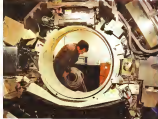
He also disputes studies tracking postal codes of patients that indicated the vast majority using the General's emergency came from outside the downtown area—many in the city's northeast where a new 24-hour, fully equipped emergency suite is now operating at the Peter Lougheed hospital. "Those findings don't take into account that many of those were waking downtown or visiting the clinic and staying downtown," Rich says. During the usual Calgary Stampede in July, when the city is flooded with visitors, the General's emergency ward often treated upwards of 800 people daily. This summer, the absence of downtown emergency services will get a severe test when Calgary hosts an estimated 120,000 visitors at the World's Fair/Expo Games, just before the Stampede.

Dr. Rob Abernethy, who spent 13 years in the General's emergency and advised the provincially appointed body that closed the downtown hospital, admits to nagging doubts. Abernethy says the three emergency departments now in operation, coupled with a fast-response road and helicopter ambulance system, also might get the service it needs. "If the bottom line is we don't have a downtown hospital, and what does that really mean," he wonders. "No-body knows because it hasn't been done before." Yet time and, critics warn, tragic experience, will provide an answer.

D. E. in Calgary



■ Cressman writing a farewell message as a wall at the General's "why stressful" situation



■ The CT scan's move and its staff move "It's all over"

apely as the hospital chaplain, Presbyterian minister Brown Milne, stands on a chair and delivers a eulogy. "In our Christian tradition, we talk of life after death, and there will be life after the death of this emergency," he says. "This is the breaking up of a family, but you will be taking your high standards elsewhere and whatever institution gets you will be very, very lucky."

After minutes of keeping her emotions at check, nurse Debbie King, a 45-year veteran of emergency, sits no longer held back. "It's very sad," she says and tears. "You know no idea how much of yourself and your emotions you have invested in this place. This final moment brings all those feelings together."

APRIL 26: THE HAPPY PATIENT Calgary head assistant Mary Lou Whiffin, 60, the General's last elective surgery patient, is preparing to be moved to the Loughheed with the two others left in her ward. She has nothing but praise for the staff and the care she re-

ceived after undergoing a hip replacement. "It was never concerned about the quality of care," says Whiffin, holding a basket of flowers on her lap as she leaves in a wheelchair. "I don't care if it's a bit noisy and there are buses around, as long as I can reap a bit and get the situation I need, and I do."

APRIL 26: THE ACCIDENT Two days almost to the hour, after Bow Valley's emergency closed, a life-and-death drama unfolds during rush hour. Three teenagers are critically injured in their car collision with a city bus just minutes from the Bow Valley and the new emergency unit at the Loughheed. But emergency technicians decide to take the three to the city's only major trauma centre at the Footfalls hospital, 23 km away. Even with police blocking traffic, it takes 15 minutes for the first ambulance and 14 minutes for the two others to reach the Footfalls. One 17-year-old dies the next day from severe head injuries. His distraught family asking if his life would have been saved if the Bow Valley emergency had still been open. But regional health authority officials insist that, because of the severity of his injuries, the youth would have been taken to the renowned Footfalls trauma unit in any case.

APRIL 26: THE AFTERMATH Coping a remarkably smooth transition, the transfer of the final acute-care medical wards is completed four days ahead of schedule. Last to leave are four patients from the general emergency ward, the same day the last operating room closes. The General is no more. After months since the hospital's doors close at the end of June are a chronic-care mental health ward—which will move to the Loughheed—and 22 out-patient clinics. The 80th & 88th Centre, a new downtown clinic offering 24-hour doctor care for non-life-threatening needs, has handled 1,500 patients in its first month. Only six have to be transferred to hospital by ambulance, and none died.

The Loughheed emergency hasn't the ground rent. On five of its first 20 days, the new unit saw more emergency cases than did the Footfalls or Rockyview, reaching a peak of 221. The volume of work inevitably have subsumed the morale problems that once concerned Don Kelly. "People have had to work together very quickly," he says and a wall of activity as a middle-aged man wheeled by on a stretcher for X-rays. "The staff is already very cohesive." As for the move itself, Kelly wishes there had been more time for staff orientation, since it was determined who was going where. "Two weeks just wasn't enough. We could have used two months."

In the new state-of-the-art intensive-care unit on the second floor, Ming White feels more relief than satisfaction that the transition is finally over. There were not enough surgical beds at the Loughheed during the transition, she says, causing a patient backlog in the new ICU. "No patients were hurt," says White. "But it shows when you move a vibrant acute-care unit, you need support at both ends." As for Kim Webster, he has already been paid back all but \$300 of the \$1,200 he transferred for the move. The General's closure and respects the rest soon. But he remains upset about the way the General died. "There was no process," he complains. "If the public had been involved before the decision was made, there could have been a lot less stress and heartache." Perhaps. But after 107 years, the passing of Calgary's "grand old lady" was bound to produce strong emotions. □

small business tips



Dan Plashkes
President
International Data Response Corp.
Toronto/San Diego

What do Canadians do best? Straight out of York University's business school, Dan Plashkes asked that question in his search for a pathway to international success. "I saw Canadians were good at finance and we had invented the telephone," he recalls. Why not combine the two?

He took on marketing and customer care assignments for other companies, operating over the phone. The first year, in 1986, S&P Data Response Corp. turned a \$300,000 profit, mostly selling subscriptions to basic cable and specialty channels. By the end of his second year, Dan had three buyers' offices. We know we were on to something.

The vision of the early 1990s launched Dan's fortunes into the stratosphere. Companies desperately needed sales and customer care—but few could afford full-time help. They turned to Dan's S&P's telephone-based agents. To meet the demand, Dan quickly adopted the latest call centre technologies.

Last March, Dan merged S&P with ProMark One Ltd. of Phoenix to form International Data Response Corp., tapping into the massive U.S. call-centre market from new headquarters in San Diego with more than 30 locations and 3,000 employees throughout North America. Dan is the largest shareholder—and a dedicated entrepreneur. "I've run the best process for a log organisation," he says. "I like to take an idea and make it grow."

Dan's tips

1 Make your banker as shy

"We grew a 200% to 300% a year and I never went to one-on-one financing," Dan says. "So you can guess that I worked well with my bank." It helped that he sent a copy of every new account to his banker to help him understand our program. It paid off: the bank shared, patience with Dan's initial unfamiliarity with good bookkeeping practices. "When I needed loans," he says, "they were as the wall for me."

2 Stay focused on the business plan that your bank and partners have bought into

There are many opportunities out there, and you may start believing you could do better at another line of work in those tough early years. Avoid the temptation. Some of Dan's early customers wanted him to take an equity position rather than provide a service. Eventually, he remembered he liked his business—that's why he chose it. It turned out to be the right decision.

3 Keep your eye on the future. Remember, the future is a two-edged sword—

long-term and short-term. Don't overinvest in the short-term and don't underestimate the long-term, Dan says. His track record is his conviction that in the long term, companies would successfully adapt the low-cost, highly targeted technologies of telephone sales and service. But, he warns, don't go overboard as a future guess. As an entrepreneur, you can't possibly doubt the rapid pace of pursuing something that naturally appears to be the future.

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Solutions for a small planet



The Spice Girls: naming all five has become a test of ignorance for politicians

delinquent and otherwise lead singer of Oasis, the upstart Manchester band whose songs became the sound track to 1990. Kennedy is a poet in a wide sector. Although few North Americans have heard of Liam and Paddy, that does not bother their British fans, who crave at the door of the High Street and Elizabeth Street, the last British star couple Americans remember toward over.

Unlike past waves of British pop music, the current rash of new bands seems less intent on copying of the American shores, staying instead in homegrown lanes. British music eventually divides into two categories. There is Britpop, an amalgamation of 30 years of pop music styles best defined by Oasis, which Paul Savage, publicity guru for some of the genre's most successful bands, describes as "a celebration of our

Britain, naming all five Spice Girls has become the test of ignorance that interviewers like to toss at unsuspecting politicians and church leaders. But despite four number 1 singles already, nobody expects the Spice Girls to reverse the musical canon.

Still, the British rather in paying off for everyone from the film-makers who made Hollywood's *Dance central* than their (The English Ballet) who were among the first to own who can't pay the champagne into the party till you drop crowd isn't enough. "It's obscene how much money goes through here in a night," says former Tottenham Paul Brown, floor manager of the exclusive Club de Paris nightclub on Piccadilly Circus, where those who can't afford to rent the £2,300-a-night private Jacuzzi must struggle through sweat-soaked bodies for space on the dance floor. The good times are not paying dividends, however, for the man who likes to think his policies are responsible for throwing the party in the first place. Conservative Prime Minister John Major.

Brown will cast ballots in a general election on May 1, and every opinion poll indicates that Major will be handing power over to the Tony Blair-led Labour Party. Few believe that Blair will reverse the Tories' free-market policies that are helping Britain's economy outperform her nearest European partners. "People in the United Kingdom have become anti-things," says 23-year-old trader Neil Dunch, sitting at a Guinness in a City pub after work. "I'm not saying that the past few years haven't been painful for many people. But Brits now know that if you want something, you have to pay for it. Electing a Labour government may mean that we've collectively decided we want more hospitals, or more police. But we also know that this time, we have to pay for it."

In the past, switching from a Tory to a Labour government meant a dramatic swing of the political pendulum. Now, the two parties are virtual clones of each other on major economic issues, a perception that has lowered voter interest in the campaigns. Voters have locked in on this election and ignored France or Germany. There is little opposition to shrinking the state's role in the economy. And globalisation has shown some benefits for Britain. The country that once ruled a global empire now welcomes investment from such countries Third World countries in the Caribbean and South Korea, whose car-corporations have created jobs in depressed areas where British-owned plants and shops had closed.

But Blair is benefiting from a raging

WORLD BRITAIN

Cool Britannia

In fashion, music and film, British style rules the day

There is no better pedigree in pop culture than the name McCartney. By allowing an upstart 30-year-old Brit to wield the scissors at a leading French fashion house is not as risky as it might seem when the designer is Stella McCartney, daughter of ex-beatle Paul. There are still those for whom the term British fashion conjures images of staid tweed dating from the Battle of Britain, or safety pins stabbed through a cheek. Get over it. "Britnitchness" is the bane of cool this year. There exists no more style-a-century house than Dior, but the French company's chief new designer is London's John Galiano, whose gender-bias monochrome makes him look as if he should be swinging in on a chandelier as a 1950s smoothie. Givenchy has treated its reputation to rubble. Alexander McQueen from London's east end. For the Chloé line, it was just a question of whether she'd heard a trend. Last week, they hired McQueen as head designer, who quickly vowed to bring a "sense of Englishness" to Chloé's design.

At Cool Britannia, the cocktail of pop culture blending fashion, music, movies, food and football that has made British style again and again is a burst of national self-indulgence. It is a country in transition. Age-old traditions and institutions are under siege, while waters seem set to flow on the sound-bites. Conservative after 18 years in power. Yet the overall mood is anything but sour. London is awash in cash, led by the money-gobbling City of London financial district and a property market that has yet to bump its head on the ceiling.

All that money dripping from the pockets of young brokers and two-prime-time heirs of the landed gentry underwrites a London scene that evokes comparisons to the swinging London of the 1960s. New music abounds. The British film industry is on a special wave in front of the TV cameras this behind the glass. "There is this buzz in London now," says *Entertainment* magazine designer Patrick Cox, who has lived in London

since 1983 and has seen "some dark days when England was down the toilet." Now, he knows into London who have come to London to shop for clothes. "Some of the stuff is even made in Milan," says Cox. "I say, 'Why are you spending all this extra money to fly here to shop? And they say, 'We just want that London experience'."

In the boots or glow cycle that so characterizes its on land life, Britain is now enjoying another intoxicating high. Even England's soccer, famous for its larger than life, is an object of national pride again. Using near a football stadium once meant putting smoking tape over the windows and keeping the cat indoors on game days. This along came media merchant Rupert Murdoch, who poured hundreds of millions of pounds into televising the English Premier League. Riches took the football environment upscale. Death-inspiring rain-only terraces have come down, replaced by corporate boxes. More women are working. And foreign stars now



New trouble star McCartney: Five companies (right) English swing again

clash to don jerseys in England, where the style of play is more entertaining and the suburbs are Planet Beckham. The Chelsea club, which once harbored England's most notorious white supremacist thugs among its fans, has become an exotic roller of international players led by Black Dutch professional Rudi Voller, the Black Dutch player-manager. The devalued Oldtime of London's most popular celebrities.

The king and queen of the British celebrity circle, however, are Liam Gallagher, one of the country's top rock stars, and his new wife, Patsy Kensit, who has now married three of them. Gallagher is a professional

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own culture." And there is the electronic thunder of dance music, which dominates Britain's huge club following. "The real creativity is in the dance music, though I confess I don't understand it," says recordist Nick Harnley, 30, who has written best-sellers on soccer (*Power Punk*) and Japanese (*What Phish?*). "I think it's about time there was more I didn't understand."

Only the Spice Girls, a happy five-woman sing-and-dance combo put together by producers last year, were positioned to crack the American market. Their "girl power" image is cleverly aimed at teenage sailors, and shows signs of crossing the ocean. Is



some that all the conspicuous consumption adorns a widening rift between the extremely rich and the middle and lower classes. But when staying on the treadmill gets harder all the time, "We are a much less robust society," says Ian Jack, 53, editor of the prestigious *Granta* magazine and a self-admitted "gloomer." "By and large, we had a civil and polite society untroubled by petty corruption. But the global market has played its part in disturbing this sweet little country."

Jack joins the British middle-class under strain, a monarchy beset by a soap opera for the tabloids, a parliament chagrined by a slew of bribery scandals, even the nearly 300-year union between England and Scotland up for reconsideration. "This is not the place it used to be," says Jack. "After the last war, we went up an empire without losing the things and values at the centre of British life." Now, he says, "The whole notion of Britain is up for grabs."

"Ask me a question," says the man who has done more than anyone else to stain British politicians with ignorance, sitting in one of his offices above the world's most famous department store. Maligned Al Fayed is wearing a jazy silk shirt that

flashes his pocket. The Harrods owner says he has been shopping a select group of ministers and MPs only and gives, but the government still rejected his citizenship application and issued a report calling him a liar. So Al Fayed went to the media with stories of ministers shopping up at Harrods offers to collect brown envelopes stuffed with cash. Newspapers then set up traps to show that MPs could be bought to ask questions in Parliament on behalf of clients. And a harsh light was suddenly shone on the fact that most MPs were holding down lucrative outside business interests, without even having to declare who they were working for. The whole issue became lumped under the label "cash for questions," or just "Nexus," and it haunts the Conservatives still.

"It's a crusade, you know," says Al Fayed on his unconsciously heretofore angry at the Tories, suddenly chuckling at their crackles that send his public affairs director interposing, "That's not about Nexus, Mohamed," he corrects. "It's justice."

"Absolutely," says Al Fayed, sitting up straight. "When you pay someone for some thing and then you get nothing..." He pauses. "Nexus, he's the son of a clown, right? He left school at 16. Now

'The whole notion of Britain is up for grabs'

would fiddle a credit card for about \$400, though this particular bespoke cut is not available on the Harrods shop floors below. It is almost midway through an election that the Conservatives seem doomed to lose, thanks in no small part to the allegations of corruption that Al Fayed has joined to John Major's government over the past two years—and he is enjoying the spectacle of a government about to be tossed out. Al Fayed does not really take questions. He just listens politely for a moment and attacks.

"It is enriched crime, a mafia," is how the Egyptian businessman describes the senior Tories and officials he blames for refuting him. British citizenship and branding him a liar. "All the crooks infiltrated the system under Margaret Thatcher, and most of them have skeletons in their closets. It took me, as Egyptian, to flush them out. Now, too, too."

So he did Al Fayed's battle with the Conservative government springs from his early mid-1980s takeover of the House of Fraser, which owns Harrods. Since then, he claims to have eradicated corruption in high circles that destroyed some of the future of the country he calls his second home. He owns a castle in Scotland, and loves British symbols like Harrods (he claims to be married and buried on a personal living lake into the roof of the store's new Egyptian room). But after winning the Harrods takeover battle, he found himself attacked in the House of Commons and put under investigation over past business connections. "These people still won't accept a foreigner like me," he seethes. "It's racism, hypocrisy."

Al Fayed asked a lobbyist to track his Green how to defend himself, and was told to just sit down

like Henry VIII, sitting there, forgetting about where he came from and people's problems with the hospitals and the schools. Instead, he defends all those crooks. People like that have to be finished up. Al Fayed shakes his head. "Ask things else you want to ask?"

Parliament is not the only British tradition taking a beating. The myth of the English countryside has always been firmly fixed in the British psyche, like the local food and streets and green borders of each 100-year-old Cotswold parish that add to the beauty of the walls of ancient stone. But rural England is under tremendous stress. Sixty million people live on an island that could be dropped into the Great Lakes, and expanding cities and resorts are squeezing its green landscape.

The battle to preserve the countryside has made a media sensation out of 20-year-old Daniel Hooper, a roads protester who goes by the name Swaggy. His tactic is to tunnel several meters under greened that contractors want cleared for new roads—and they refuse to come out until now he is in Manchester, digging in to obstruct construction of a second airport runway. To his critics, Swaggy's so-called direct action tactics are undemocratic. Send letters into the tunnels to flush him out, was Lord Cawston's suggestion. But the cult around him cuts across class lines. "I'm a fan of Swaggy," says Tim Gilling, a banker who is out for a Saturday fox hunt in the Cotswolds. "So much of this country is under concrete now that a whole way of life is disappearing."

Offroad's own subculture of hunting with the hounds also faces extinction. Animal rights



Guilty (above) Harrods store. Al Fayed (above): "These people still won't accept a foreigner like me"



Foxhunting: devotees fear a ban may be next

groups have fought for years to ban fox and stag hunting, and they won a watershed victory this month when members of the blood of hunted stags proved the animals suffer stress while being chased. The study forced the National Trust, which holds large tracts of public land, to end stag hunting on its property. Many expect a law ban has to come soon. "Folks love all the National Trust stags out the Land Rover this morning," says a smiling Elizabeth Clarke from outside her mount, before entering off to join the Valley of the White Horse club's last hunt meet of the season.

On his last Saturday morning, when they know the fox hunt will not be strong and the hunting will be poorer, some riders mill about on their horses discussing the future of their pastime. "Many people were shocked by the report," said the personal Gilling, who says he won't hunt stags again. But he will not yet give up the fox hunt, "It's such a glorious time to do," he says with a soft smile. "It appeals to something deep inside you. Children play chase games. And this is the ultimate chase game." Caroline Hill, eyes blazing, goes from under her cap, won't stop either. "I'm sure the hounds would vote for us if they had a choice," she says. "They know when they aren't putting out a scent. This morning, I saw a fox and he didn't even run. He said, 'Buster you're not morning. I'm watching.' Then in a while he'll think, 'Hem, perhaps I'll go kill something now.'" Hill

gets angry when she thinks about the fox. "They're snarling, you know."

What makes the hunters is that they believe they are the ones preserving the countryside from its inevitable onslaught of developers. "The English landscape has been plundered over the centuries, partly by hunting," says William Marley, a self-published art book publisher as he takes a spin from a strop cup filled with port and bread. "But we're losing it," he says sadly. "There's not much left to preserve."

Major is getting a political lesson in how that way of life is disappearing. He is kind of barking back to English institutions, to warm beer and cricket on the village green. "I fell in love with cricket as a schoolboy, bewitched by its romance," the Prime Minister wrote in a newspaper review of a cricket documentary last year. "I seemed to me to be essentially English in character, a game for heroes." But cricket is out of step with nation's life. England's cricketers lose international matches at a scandalous rate, causing *Whicker's*, the cricket bible, to write that the English team "resembles a bad-tempered grandmother at a teenage rave, barely comprehending what is going on." Major's sport is not all that fun.

The money is in football now, evident by the Jaguars and Range Rovers jockeying for parking spots outside sparkling new stadiums before games. The money follows the money. "We are not a literary nation any more," says Ian Storrar, author of well-received novels set in London's east end. "Books are just units. It is a clubbing, pop-culture society used to instant satisfaction. People here once looked to America as an exemplar of principle. Now it is only a place to sell yourself. It is about money, and money is becoming a nation of shopkeepers again."

It is hard to argue with Blair as he leads the way out of the City of London through shrouded passages and into the Spitalfields neighborhood, just the two-way car park covering the spot where Jack the Ripper did his last victim. Most of the buildings in Spitalfields are dilapidated or abandoned, and it seems the movement into the second-the-clock trading in clothes and currencies in the nearby City. But the money is coming to Spitalfields, too. Tiny, rowdy flats are selling for over \$400,000—"It's madness, really," confesses a local agent—"as the brewers, artists and speakers look for new properties to develop." The Market Cafe menu boasts a Spitalfields still-defiantly advertises blood, bacon and beer and onion pudding. But the wine bars are on their way.

Yet despite the flash of cash, British culture retains appeal, the freshness and optimism of its music, its lively newspapers, an ability to incorporate other cultures into its own, and a self-deprecating wit that takes some of the sting out of no longer being a global power. So what if dim traces of Londoners comes to an end. Soon the Europeans may be mocking British fashion and food again, but pop culture is meant to be short-lived. "I wish it didn't so boom and bust here, but we should enjoy this English renaissance while it lasts," says designer Cox. "This is a great place to call home. Just never, never get tired of it."

Tired of it? Tired of life. □



Qian Qunzhi, China's vice premier, the foreign affairs minister was visibly uneasy about the policy.

WORLD CHINA

'P' as in pragmatism

In its brief history of relations with China, the public face of Prime Minister Jean Chrétien's government has also alternated between enthusiasm and intransigence. On the subject of expanded trade, Chrétien, who led a mission that signed \$6 billion worth of deals there in 1986—is always enthusiastic. But his government has much less to say about China's uneasy human rights record. In a March 1994 speech in Montreal, Chrétien said that Canada should not act like "a big sister" on the subject because it was too small a country to have any influence. And last week, despite heat from some Liberals, pragmatism triumphed over principle again: Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy said that Canada would drop its institutional co-sponsorship of an annual UN resolution condemning China's human rights situation. "They [China] agreed to score new measures," said Axworthy. "We agreed to give them a chance."

In effect, axworthy lifted a clearly item Axworthy in an interview with Maclean's, Canada agreed to accept the inevitable. For the past six years, Ottawa has supported a UN resolution that expressed "concern" over China's human rights record. The measure was backed by European Union members and the United States, but was always shorted on procedural grounds by the UN's Commission on Human Rights, in the face of furious lobbying by China. Then, this year, France said it would not support such a resolution, and Germany, Italy, Spain and five other countries soon followed suit. That left Denmark as the principal sponsor of a resolution that, among other things, criticized China's human rights record and its

treatment of Tibet. At that point, said Howard Bullock, Canada's ambassador to China, "It was clear to us that it would not pass. Therefore, the conclusion we made was, did we wish to sponsor a resolution that would not pass, or was it sensible to try other approach?" Last week, delegates in Geneva voted 2 to 17 against the latest effort to have the resolution debated.

Against that backdrop, Axworthy, who visited Beijing in early April, negotiated a series of agreements with Chinese officials aimed at mollifying concerns of human rights activists. They include a meeting (to take place at an unspecified time) of a joint Canada-China human rights committee, Canadian assistance in developing a legal aid system, co-operative work on minority affairs issues, a visit by a Canadian delegation, including church groups, to Tibet; and "work towards implementation" of

China's obligations to meet standards set by the UN Convention Against Torture.

These agreements allow Canadian officials to claim that they achieved specific results that matter more than the symbolic support of the UN resolution. But Axworthy, often a lonely voice among Chrétien's senior cabinet members in his pursuit of human rights issues, conceded that Canada's policy towards China "is very much a work in progress." There are, he said, "strong signs of a breakthrough on this front in China—and we are also saying we will revisit this issue in another year if we are not satisfied."

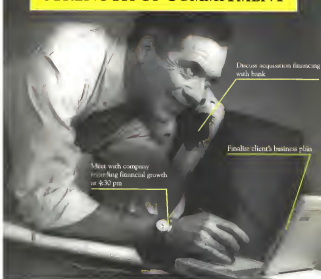
head"—and China postponed a planned exchange of visits.

An adviser to Chrétien and the Prime Minister discussed the issue "at some length" with President Bill Clinton on his visit to Washington in early April: the United States backed the resolution. Another adviser admitted that the decision to abandon Denmark led to "no small anguish" for some members of Chrétien's inner circle. But the government action showed its priorities as its approach in two meetings last week. In the first, Axworthy and Chan were dispatched to Vancouver to welcome Beijing's leading official on Hong Kong, which will be handed back to China on July 1; the official, Lu Ping, was also scheduled to meet Chrétien. By contrast, Chrétien's aides did not schedule plans for him to meet Hong Kong human rights activist Martin Lee until fewer than 24 hours before the event—and then, scheduled only 15 minutes for

the session. Lee appeared determined not to directly criticize Canada's policy towards China. But his chaplain showed when he said, "Mr. Chrétien, believe that looking at things in the long term is a better policy. We see disappointment, because there isn't too much time. It's important for us to raise these issues now." And in the government's view, it seems, just as important for Canada not to do so.

ANTHONY WILSON-SMITH
with PAUL MCGINLEY in Beijing and
LANCE FISHER in Ottawa

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World NOTES

TROUBLE FOR CLINTON

There were ominous rumblings for U.S. President Bill Clinton in the so-called Whitewater affair. His former business partner James McDougal was sentenced to three years in jail for fraud for involvement in the bankruptcy of a savings and loans bank in Little Rock, Ark. McDougal said he had changed his story denying a Clinton role in the crime and was co-operating with investigators. Said McDougal: "I just got sick and tired of lying for the fellow."

DOLE BAILS OUT NEWT

Former U.S. presidential candidate Bob Dole will lend fellow Republican and House Speaker Newt Gingrich the \$400,000 he needs to pay a penalty left hanging from his ethics case. A House committee found him guilty of using tax-exempt funds to promote political goals. Dole's lawyer termed the loan, due within eight years, a "friend-to-friend" transaction.

BELGIAN SOMALIA SHOCK

Top military leaders in Belgium are reviewing training methods following revelations that its elite paratroops committed atrocities during the 1993 UN Somali peace mission. Leaked photographs showed paratroopers leaving a Somali child over a fire and urinating on a dead Somali's face. One man was allegedly confined and left to die in a scorched forest. Canadian-Arbitron investigators, members of which turned in and killed a Somali teenager on the same UN operation, has been disbanded.

INDIA CHOOSES PM

India's United Front coalition named Foreign Minister Inder Kumar Gujral, 77, as the country's next prime minister after the Congress party dropped its opposition to the formation of a centre-left government. The Congress had triggered the crisis by withdrawing its support for the coalition, forcing Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao to resign after a non-confidence vote. The Congress said it would support the United Front again, under a new leader.

A WOMAN FOR IRAN?

A female former MP said she would register as a candidate in Iran's May 29 presidential election. The 39-year-old Azar Taleqani, 54, will test whether the Islamic state'srigidly worded constitution allows women candidates. A screening council will decide.



INTO ALBANIA: The first of more than 6,000 Italian-led soldiers from Europe moved into the Albanian port city of Durres to help deliver food and to the strife-torn country. The day after the long-awaited troops began arriving, Albanian's rival political parties agreed to hold parliamentary elections on June 26. That could help end the anarchy that arose from protests over bankrupt pyramid schemes in which many Albanians lost their life savings. However, international mediator Franz Vranitzky of Austria said the election will proceed only if rebels who control the south of the country give up their demands for independence.

Mandela steps in on Zaïre

Rebel attempts to end the 31-year reign of Zaïrean President Mobutu Sese Seko seemed ready to move, at least briefly, from the battlefield to the negotiating table. Laurent Kabila's Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire controls more than half of the country and has surrounded the capital, Kinshasa. Kabila has long demanded that Mobutu step down and leave the country, but a last-ditch intervention by South African President Nelson Mandela headed off an immediate battle when he convinced Kabila to enter into direct talks with Mobutu. Most of the populace of the resource-rich but impoverished country has welcomed Kabila's

forces as they advance, with little opposition towards Kinshasa. That support allowed Kabila to insist that the talks, proposed for Cape Town, focus only on Mobutu's resignation. "When he is ready for this, I shall go and attend a short day's ceremony on the peaceful transfer of power," Kabila said. Mobutu's people, meanwhile, said they agreed to a meeting "on principle," but diplomats noted that his health may not be up to granting negotiations or to travelling outside Zaïre. Mobutu, 56, is seriously ill with prostate cancer. Mandela said Mobutu was "very co-operative." But in a sign that dramatic changes loomed, he referred to both Mobutu and Kabila as "president."

A fire near Mecca kills hundreds of pilgrims

Five killed by high winds through a sprawling tent village outside Mecca, killing 543 Muslim pilgrims who had travelled to the Saudi Arabian city to celebrate Islam's holiest week. Sails of tents and the fires, which also injured at least 1,300, started when a cooking gas canister exploded. Many of the victims, mostly from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, were trampled to death as pilgrims fled in panic. "Oh my God, it was horrible," said an Egyptian pilgrim named Elsho. "People could not get away." The annual hajj pilgrimage to the birthplace of the Prophet Mohammed attracted at least two million people this year.

Trading insults

Critics assail a proposed treaty on investment

BY JOHN SCHOFIELD

Gordon Wilson outraged. "This is nuts," the veteran B.C. politician declares in his paper-strewn office in Victoria's ornate legislature. Canada, he warns, is on the verge of handing "complete control" of its economy to foreigners—threatening the future of cherished institutions such as the CBC and services like public auto insurance in British Columbia. The daily rhetoric is reminiscent of the warring national debate over free trade during the 1988 general election. As the scrappy leader of the B.C. Liberals at the time, Wilson was one of the most vocal opponents of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. In 1994, he publicly lambasted Prime Minister Jean Chrétien for signing the North American Free Trade Agreement.

These days, Wilson and other critics say the stakes are even higher. The surge of their fury is the proposed Multinational Agreement on Investing, a wide-ranging accord currently being negotiated in Paris by Canada and the 35 other members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The proposed deal, opponents say, goes far beyond NAFTA in tying the hands of Canadians to shape their future, and could cost thousands of jobs. "We're giving away the keys to the country," says Wilson.

While Wilson's dire predictions are open to debate, there is no doubt that the proposed agreement would give multinational companies unprecedented access to the Canadian market. Renato Ruggieri, director-general of the World Trade Organization, recently said of the talks, "We are writing the constitution of a single global economy." Supporters say Canada must open its borders further to ensure that export-oriented domestic companies enjoy greater access to foreign markets. "From a business viewpoint, it's a no-brainer," says Alan Rappman, a University of Toronto business professor who proposed a background study for the OECD before the current round of negotiations began in 1995.

Whatever the agreement's merits, the federal government is clearly not anxious to draw attention to the negotiations during the run-up to an expected June election. Although few Canadians have heard of the proposed deal, the talks have been going on for two years, and an agreement is likely by May or next year. Tony Clarke, who runs an Ottawa-based nationalist think-tank, says the issue is so sensitive that, until last week, it was never even broached in the Liberal caucus.

Federal NDP Leader Alexa McDonough, by contrast, has been following the talks closely in hopes of embarrassing the Liberals on



Opposition trade minister says it is 'too early' to debate the pact

the election trail. Chrétien, she says, is still shying from criticism that he reneged on his 1993 election promise to renegotiate NAFTA. By raising the spectre of the MAI, she wants to remind voters of the government's flip-flop. "The Liberals," she says, "have no strategy for them to be a broad public debate."

Quietly, however, Canada has backed the deal from the beginning. Chrétien gave it his seal of approval during the 1995 Group of Seven summit in Halifax, says Rappman, who claims credit for helping to shape the proposed treaty in his background paper that same year. Former Liberal cabinet minister Donald Johnston, now secretary-general of the OECD, is also a strong advocate. "There

RULES OF THE GAME

The proposed Multinational Agreement on Investment would require CANADA to:

- Stop** leaving Canadian companies or investors left behind out from privatizing Crown corporations. Among other things, this could make it harder for workers to buy their own companies.
- Limit** laws requiring that a majority of a company's directors be residents of Canada or certain provinces, or that married men for foreign executives and managers.
- Openly** declare which industries are competing or partly closed to foreign investment, and set a maximum for trading with those barriers. Canada and France, for example, want to protect poultry industries, but the United States opposes such protection.
- Set up** arbitration panels to rule on disputes between investors and governments.



Logging in British Columbia: a Renault test vehicle in Germany (below): opponents say it would kill job-creation programs



are Canadian fingerprints all over the MAI," says Rappman. "The untold story is that we're the real heroes getting it going."

Trade Minister Art Eggleton plays down Canada's role and insists that the Liberals will not agree to anything that threatens Canada's culture or sovereignty. "As far as I know—I'm sure somebody told me this and I too just ago—we did not initiate this meeting," he said. He added that, with a settlement as much as a year away, "it's too early" to debate the deal publicly.

Even so, Eggleton is obviously concerned about a possible backlash. Last week, a day after Moore's questioned him about the talks, his office held a memo to all Liberal MPs warning them to a closer-door MAI briefing to discuss media reports that "raise the question of potential problems as to the sovereignty of Canada."

Applauding the NDP, the opposition parties do not seem worried about the proposed agreement. Tory chief Jean Charest failed to return calls on the issue. Bernad Schreier, the Bloc Québécois' trade critic, says his party agrees with the MAI in principle. Reform trade critic Charles Peterson is also a supporter. "I really think it's in Canada's interests to go along with it."

Critics, however, say the agreement runs counter to Canada's interests. Clarke, director of the Polaris Institute, says the carpe-

diation of the MAI is a demand for so-called national treatment for foreign investors. That could prevent OECD member countries from favouring domestic companies in government loan programs or when Crown corporations are privatized.

Under NAFTA, Canada reserved the right to limit foreign ownership of companies such as Air Canada to 25 per cent. But Clarke says that if the government decided to privatize parts of the CBC, it would be hard-pressed under MAI to prevent bids from such U.S. giants as Time-Warner or Disney. He adds there is nothing in the draft agreement to indicate Canada is seeking cultural protection. Only France has asked for an exemption for "literary and artistic works."

Even if Canada did try to protect specific industries, the agreement contains clauses that would require the elimination of such barriers by a specified date or prevent Canada from introducing new restrictions. The low-interest loans and subsidies that Ottawa gives to poorer regions and selected companies are also vulnerable, says Clarke. The foreign-owned firm was passed over for such loans, it could hold the government before an arbitration board to seek compensation.

NAFTA already gives U.S. companies the right to challenge Ottawa. Last week, Ethyl Corp. of Richmond, Va., told the federal government with a \$347-million damage claim for banning the gasoline additive MMT. But Clarke says the MAI goes further by allowing companies to seek compensation if a government interferes with an investment they had not made but were only considering.

If the MAI does put an end to government-sponsored loan programs, the impact could be devastating, says Tom Korynbach, chief financial officer of Crev Producers Inc. at Burnaby, B.C. The company, which makes isomerizing equipment for the refining industry, has expanded in the past four years from about 100 employees to 600. That growth would have been impossible, says Korynbach, without \$2.5 million in interest-free loans from Ottawa. Government loans also helped Ballard Power Systems Inc. of Burnaby, B.C., which last week announced a \$600-million alliance with Rastatt-Braun AG of Germany to develop clean-burning fuel-cell engine systems. "I would hate to see those investments go sour," says Korynbach. "They've provided a lot of jobs."

Despite the drawbacks, Canada cannot afford to remain outside the MAI, says Vancouver trade lawyer Chris Thomas. "Canada is locked in the '80s that the world was heading a pace to its door, and that isn't the case any more," says Thomas, who is now defending Mexico in a dispute brought by two U.S. waste management firms. Thomas adds that the draft treaty contains some important benefits. European governments, he says, have manipulated environmental laws to keep out Canadian forest products. The MAI will make that barrier, he says, while discouraging OECD members from introducing measures like the U.S. Helms-Burton Act, which punishes foreign nations that do business with Cuba. "Anything that makes for greater stability is welcome," says Jim Moore, a vice-president with the Alliance of Manufacturers & Exporters Canada.

Most Canadians, says Ruggieri, now realize that agreements like the MAI are essential for the country's survival. "The only way you are [economic] non-viable is have left in that these agreements are an upgrade for business," says Ruggieri. "If you don't like laws now, you have a problem today." For Wilson and others, however, the mere prospect of the treaty is the threat to Canada's sovereignty. □

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Business NOTES

DISAPPEARING DEFICIT

With one month to go in the 1997-1998 fiscal year, the federal deficit is less than half of Finance Minister Paul Martin's \$19-billion target. Ottawa says the shortfall for the 11 months between April and February was \$7.2 billion. The comparable figure after 11 months of 1996-1997 was \$23.3 billion.

ANTI-SWEATSHOP CODE

President Bill Clinton endorsed an apparel industry code of conduct banning the use of child labor and other sweatshop conditions at shoes and clothing factories used by U.S. firms around the world. The code was the product of a task force made up of companies such as Nike Inc., L. L. Bean and Liz Claiborne Inc., labor unions and human rights groups.

WANTED: SALES STAFF

The beleaguered Eaton's department store chain will spend \$25 million this year to hire more sales staff. Company officials blamed staff cuts in previous years for declines in customer service and increased theft. Eaton's, which filed for bankruptcy protection in February, is now preparing a restructuring plan that will entail closing or selling about 30 of its 86 stores.

LEAVING THE NORTH

Air Canada is eyeing to sell its northern subsidiary, WFF Air of Yellowknife, to Ottawa-based First Air. The planned sale is part of an effort by Air Canada to restructure its regional airlines.

GERMAN CRACKDOWN

Prosecutors in Bavaria indicted an executive of the CompuServe on-line service for allegedly aiding in the trafficking of child pornography and the dissemination of Nazi symbols and violent computer games. The Cologne, Ohio-based company called the charges "baseless." The case is part of a crackdown against on-line networks by German police.

MAZDA, FORD EMBRACE

Financially troubled Mazda Motor Corp. struck an agreement with Ford Motor Co. to share basic design work and major components. Mazda's Japan's fifth-largest carmaker, is one-third owned by Ford.

U-turn on the tobacco law

Attentive lawmakers were hit shaker their heads. Only a day after the Senate passed the government's unimposing bill, Health Minister David Dingwall reversed direction by offering to allow tobacco-sponsored sporting events. In a letter to the organizers of car races in Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal, Dingwall said he would amend the bill "if necessary" to ensure motor racing continues in Canada. For months, the minister has talked tough on limiting tobacco sponsorship, arguing the benefits to public health outweigh the impact on sports and cultural events. "The ink on the bill isn't even dry and he's already backing down," said Cynthia Collard of Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada.

Meanwhile, Player's Ltd., one of Canada's leading cigarette makers and sponsor of the Montreal Grand Prix as well as three racing teams, was equally critical of the health minister. Already unhappy that Dingwall's letter referred only to three specific events—the Indy



Formula One driver Jacques Villeneuve smoking

500s in Toronto and Vancouver and the Grand Prix—company spokesmen reacted angrily to a Health Canada directive stating the government would withdraw all elements of the bill immediately. In that case, the company might have to cancel its entire sponsorship program, said Player's president Jean-Paul Blais.

In another reversal, the two largest U.S. tobacco companies have entered secret talks aimed at settling lawsuits launched by 25 states to recover billions of dollars spent treating sick smokers. Philip Morris Cos. and R.J.R. Tobacco Holdings Corp. are seeking protection against future liability. In return, they would pay up to \$450 million over the next 25 years to cover tobacco-related medical costs and would agree to strict limits on advertising.

Fuelling the future

Cell it is a hands-down triumph for Canadian technology. The Shell Smart Pump, the world's first robotic gas pump, has been unveiled in California. Developed by Interactions at Solvenergy Engineering (USE) Ltd. of Port Coquitlam, B.C., the system is faster, cheaper and safer than manual refuelling, says ISE spokesman Owen Williams. Shell commis-

sioned the robot in 1994 after a survey showed widespread dissatisfaction with self-serve stations. As a car enters the station, a Shell-supplied dashboard transmitter signals its make and model. Smart Pump locates the gas tank using infrared sensors and opens the fuel door with a suction cup. The nozzle is inserted into a special "tag cap" provided by Shell. The oil company plans to introduce the system in selected U.S. markets this year.

FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

Canada's economy is gathering speed, but the growth could eventually spell bad news for borrowers. Imports during the first two months of the year rose 12 per cent higher than a year earlier, a sign of increased business and consumer confidence. The resulting decline in the trade surplus, however, will weaken foreign confidence in the Canadian dollar and add to the pressure for higher interest rates.

The mutual fund industry posted its highest ever return on savings plan season in the first three months of the year, taking in \$22.3 billion.

"Canadian borrowing costs are moving up as a backdrop

with U.S. yields—reflecting long-abiding investor concerns over the country's huge debt, political uncertainty and commitment to a stable currency."

—Scott Brink

"Further hikes by the U.S. Federal Reserve likely mean higher interest rates here as

well. We feel that job growth will begin to pick up over the next few months, affecting the Bank of Canada's rate is modestly more interest rates."

—Canada Trade

"It remains unclear ... if the economy has turned the corner to reach a higher growth trajectory."

—Statistics Canada



People

Edited by
BARBARA FITCKENS

Taking a cue from k.d.

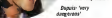
In the strange world of modern celebrities, where dreams of TV land are as real to some viewers as their friends and family, a television character's sexual orientation has generated as much buzz as the latest Washington scandal. For months, comedienne **Ellen DeGeneres**, star of the mid-morning sitcom *Ellen*, toyed with audiences about whether her alter ego is lesbian. Finally, ABC announced that on April 30 it will broadcast a one-hour episode in which Ellen Morgan comes out, becoming the first openly gay lead character on TV. That Ellen DeGeneres, 39, is a talent that in real life, too, she is gay. The acknowledgments prompted praise from gay rights advocates and threats from the religious right to end her career. But if DeGeneres wants to see how far she can go, she could ask her friend, Canadian singer **k.d. lang**, who is making a guest appearance on the coming-out episode. Lang, 35, out since 1992, has suffered more criticism for her outspokenness than for her lesbianism—though neither seems to have held her back. Last week, lang was among 50 Canadians invested with the Order of Canada.



Lang: she's always been there

Boss to a lethal babe

A first: Montreal actor **Ray Dupuis** was recruited to participate in a television adaptation of a film he loves. But he played the cost of *Nikita*, a new CTV suspense series, after the producers convinced him that they would be respectful of the original 1990 French hit *La Femme Nikita*, which also spawned a less successful 1993 Hollywood film version. Dupuis, 35, became a household name in Québec in 1992 with the series *Les Filles de Caïn*, and two years later captivated the rest of Canada as *Olivia D'Amore*, the father of the famous quintuplets, in *Millions Dollars Baby*. In *Nikita*, Dupuis portrays Michael, a mysterious vigilante at a clandestine and ruthless law enforcement organization. His attention to his secret life, the shining former street person, *Nikita* (Australian newscaster Peter Wilson), occasionally goes beyond business. "Michael is a very strong character," says Dupuis. "He is very dangerous and very smart."



Dupuis: 'very dangerous'

Prizing 'poetic truth'

Like most poets, **Anne Michaels** was accustomed to a fairly tiffle readership. So the success of her first novel, *Phenomena*, has been a pleasant surprise. The book, a complex story about a Holocaust survivor and the effect of the past on the present, has been translated into 13 languages and sold a phenomenal 150,000 copies in staggered release world-wide since last June. "I worked on *Phenomena* for a very long time," says the 39-year-old Michaels. "It is so gratifying to feel this being read." The book has also garnered glowing international reviews, such as one from *The Times* of London calling it a novel "so low-journeled," and another in the German newspaper *Der Spiegel* saying it is "enriched with poetic truth." Now, Michaels, who has started writing a second novel, has won a prize to catch the critical readers' eyes. Last week, the Toronto-based writer was presented with the Ontario Governor's Award for Best First Novel by the Ontario Book Award. Says Michaels of the prize: "It's a great way to bring readers and writers together."



Photographic silver—and gold

A picture is worth a thousand words and, in some circles, hundreds of thousands of dollars. Last week, Christie's in New York City auctioned off 28 photographs by Hungarian-born Andrei Kertész for a total of \$1,800,000. Toronto art dealer Jane Corbin, who was Kertész's agent for 10 years before his death in 1985 at 91, attended the sale on behalf of the anonymous vendor. The photos were among 42 exhibited in Kertész's first solo show in Paris in 1927, some of which were rediscovered in his Manhattan apartment in 1989. The famous image depicting Dutch artist Piet Mondrian's pipe and glasses sold for \$257,000, while *Cher Michéna* drew \$419,300. Corbin, who first met Kertész in 1974, describes him as a man "with a gentle vision and a heart for humanity. He was one of the first Modernists, and helped shape 20th-century art-making."



Cher Michéna; Corbin (left): auctioneer



Glendon College students' disastrous side-effects

administration. "Over the past five or six years, a group of hawks has landed in certain administrations," says Joyce Lomter, co-founder of a report commissioned by Trent University in the wake of a bitter, six-week strike that gripped the Peterborough, Ont., campus last fall. Pointing to protracted confrontations at Trent, Manitoba, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Mount Allison in New Brunswick, Lomter places the blame on "universities dominated by severely colored governance with indifference to disempowering more appropriate to huge corporations."

Whoever is at fault, Lomter and her co-author, former York president Harry Artman, warn that lack of collegiality can have dire consequences. "If the university is to conduct its business successfully," they write, "administrators, faculty, government, staff and students must be able to work together to resolve points of issue before they become major confrontations."

For their part, many administrators say they have had little choice but to take a harder line in dealing with students. Noting that government funding in York has dropped \$50 million over the past four years, Stevenson says that "nobody who looks at the situation can seriously argue that we can afford to make making cuts." Others have seen sympathy for professors who farm classes, only to be rebuffed by the students. "The whole point of collective bargaining," says Nelson Alton president Jim Newbold, who weathered two strikes between 1982 and 1984, "is to make certain things not at the college's expense."

Still, at the York strike, dragged into its fifth week, many on campus were clearly worried about what would happen next. In an emergency session last Thursday, York's senate ruled that students who had completed 65 per cent of their course work could choose to skip final exams. But although both sides see negotiations to hear out the students at Glendon, by week's end official bargaining had yet to resume. Another clock ticked, even those who had drawn a line in the sand were leaning for the worst. "You can't go this far without a fundamental sourcing of the campus culture," said Stevenson. "There will be very real costs to all this." No matter who wins the battle at Glendon, York itself may come out the loser. □

Education

The battle for York

BY VICTOR DWYER

It was a clandestine mission with a noble purpose. Last week, on a heavily wooded campus in North Toronto, nearly two dozen students rose at 4 a.m., quietly made their way to the main gate of York University's Glendon College, and in the predawn chill, draped an imposing banner across the entranceway. Against a blue background, its black and red letters delivered a bold message: "Students first." Meanwhile, inside the offices of the Glendon College Student Union, a small group of their comrades typed up and fired off trenchant demands to the two sides—faculty and administration—in a strike that was about to enter its 28th day. Those demands declared the students' determination to lock out all employees, and to prevent striking faculty from teaching their classes for 20 hours. And the letters requested that each side send a representative to campus at 3 p.m. to receive a simple message: "What is that message?" asked student president Dawn Pines, as she helped to black traffic at the Glendon gate. "It's that in our university, no. And that we are approaching the point where this strike is going to have disastrous self-effects for every single person at York."

On the surface, the issues surrounding the ongoing faculty strike over a grip on English-language university are straightforward. After four years without a negotiated wage in-

crease, salaries—which average \$40,000—have risen from fourth to 11th place among Ontario's 17 universities. Professors are seeking a 15-per-cent increase, the university's president denies them. Also at issue is what vice-president (academic affairs) Michael Stevenson describes as York's "very own machine for producing de la la"—its faculty retirement package. Under the current plan, professors can retire at age 60, collecting 2 1/2 times their salary. If they continue working up to another full decade—at the peak of their earning power—and then teach a single course after retirement, at a rate of up to about \$22,000, then none is traditionally left with professors question that deal. "There is some academic unemployment in this country," says political science professor Leo Patrick. "If you spend all your money buying people out, you have none left to hire younger ones."

But however contentious the issues on the table, the struggle at York appears to be part of a more fundamental battle: who should control the modern university? The strike by 1,950 faculty and affecting 40,000 students, is only the latest in a series of highly colorful institutional showdowns at campuses across the country. Many observers say these stand-offs reflect a growing tiff between ad-

A power struggle grips Canada's third-largest university

Life Promise of prosperity

Fad or fact, feng shui is all the rage

BY SHARON DOYLE DRIEDGER

It looks like an ordinary mirror, but in the eyes of Robin Kay, the small wood-framed looking glass, hanging inconspicuously above the back door of one of her boutiques, has extraordinary power. Kay—owner of a chain of fashion stores in four Canadian cities—views the mirror as a strategically placed "tool" for a problem that can't harm her business. Despite a previous location in an upscale Toronto neighborhood, the shop suffers from an inauspicious positioning of doors. The direct path from the front entrance to the rear exit—according to the rules of feng shui, the ancient Chinese art of placement—could tempt customers, and profits, to pass right through "You don't want the customer to walk in the front door and have his thoughts go right out the back door," says Kay. "To counteract that, I placed a mirror above the back

door, so the energy is brought back in." In the past three years, Kay has applied the principles of feng shui at all of her 10 locations. Paying special attention to the placement of cash drawers, lifting toilets and even traffic, ensuring that air is vital energy flows smoothly through the shops, she is intent on helping customers and employees in "a sense of harmony, well-being and serenity." In the two stores where she has paid special attention to the principles, she believes it has also enhanced them—grocery has increased by 30 per cent. "Feng shui has certainly been a positive influence on the business," says Kay.

The old does not stay there. Over the past few years, feng shui—Chinese for wind and water—has taken on a life force of its own, creating the globe via thousands of Web sites, speaking a string of TV shows, videos, workshops and the publication of dozens of books. Noticing (by the way) such titles as *Feng Shui for Dummies*, *Creating Sacred Space with Feng Shui* and *Feng Shui for Beginners*. Versatile feng shui gurus, long practiced outside the Chinese community, and even neophyte consultants are in demand, earning up to \$500 an hour for boosting the air of lightness, candor, inner-balance and well-being within customers.

Across Canada, the Books clothing chain, the Toronto Dominion Bank and BNC Do-

minion Securities are among hundreds of businesses that have become overly attuned to feng shui, along with restaurants, legal offices, hospitals and at least one church congregation. In many parts of Toronto and Vancouver, where recent influences of Chinese immigrants gave it a head start, feng shui has become as important to builders as local bylaws. Vancouver architect Ron Yuen, who worked on Li Ka-shing's Concord Pacific Place—a large residential development—claims that he would estimate how an apartment unit was laid out, ensuring that the bedroom doors did not face the front door, and there were ways "to subdivide against the good fortunes flowing out." Says Yuen, "It has permeated the development industry from the architect who designs a house, to the contractor who builds it and the real estate agent who sells it. It could be an Italian banker, an East Indian lawyer or a Caucasian real estate agent—they all talk about it."

In the 1980s, feng shui—albeit in a somewhat watered-down, Westernized version—appears to have struck a chord, with its stay out of bed, wealth and inner peace at the click of a wind chime. Its appeal is as clear as the crystals that dangle in what believers refer to as "sacred spaces." Feng shui packs the major tenets of a decade—like cooing and a concern for the environment, to a

Kay, uses a positive influence on business, with profits increasing 20 per cent

harmony with Eastern medicine and spirituality, and a yearning for simpler, stress-free life—into one neat package. Need a job? Want a lover? A cure for cancer? "Hang a crystal, place a plant, paint a wall," claims an ad for Nancy Sam-Ping, a New York City psychodermatologist and feng shui specialist. "and you will discover how you can change your environment and change your life."

But more than 100 years ago, when Chinese immigrants first brought feng shui to Canada, nobody feared "It was practiced here before the Second World War by old Chinese," says David Lai, a professor of geography at the University of Victoria. The tradition—described by Lai as "a mystical combination of Chinese philosophy, religion, astrology, cosmology, metaphysics and geographic concepts"—stretch- es back more than 3,000 years into Asian history and still plays an important role in Hong Kong, where an building is erected without the advice of a feng shui master. Central to feng shui—which Lai describes as "superstition"—is the belief that air, or life force, flows through a home or an office in much the same way that it circulates through the human body. If positive energy moves freely through a space, its inhabitants will thrive. But if it's blocked, they will experience "bad feng shui" and their health, career or relationships will suffer.

Experts warn, somewhat intensely, that most North American homes are like minefields, with potential blockages—obsta-

cles like skunk or poison arrows—threatening at every turn. Most often, skunk are straight lines or sharp angles a corner at a rough, bare-looking floor, outside a house, or a doorway that frames a straight line to a front door. "If a corner juts out into a room," says Helen Williams, a Toronto feng shui expert, "it's like a knife coming at you. Even though you don't notice it, you become a little bit nervous in your subconscious mind." Potentially, even shui experts can offer "cures" for almost any ailment, and the standard reso-

lutions for each individual are a micro-scope. "Feng shui involves calculations," observes Yip. "You change every year with the position of the stars and planets." Ultimately, feng shui requires a transcendental leap of faith. "This is an Eastern system," explains Toronto feng shui practitioner and former architect Mabel Norrell. "It's not linear, not logical, it's not perfect. It doesn't always add up. There's ignorance and confusion." Sam-Ping offers a "sacred" bath for feng shui, explaining it in terms of



Yuen's bar permeated the development industry

"an invisible field of energy"—an acceptable analogy, she feels, as a normal cell phones and laptop computers. "This invisible energy affects much more than we can see," she argues. "We realize that social changes energy, light changes energy. If a couple is having problems, I might say hang a pink bag shui crystal on a nine-inch red string as your relationship improves." To doubters, Sam-Ping puts the question: "If someone best puts a needle in your wrist to treat your liver, can you see that?"

Wanda Rybczynski, the acclaimed Canadian author and architect, now at the University of Pennsylvania, understands the acupuncture connection, but remains skeptical. "Orientals have always attracted people in the West," says Rybczynski. "Acupuncture and Chinese medicine had a niche." But he cautions that the North American understanding of feng shui is often wrong. "I've produced 100,000 feng shui kits, an interesting bit of folklore." For Lai, another skeptic, the real value of feng shui may be psychological. "I consider the feng shui man a psychiatrist," he says. "If you believe him when he says, 'Put a fish pond here and your business will be better, you give me the confidence to do it.' If you don't believe it, you say, 'The hell with that.'"

Author Evelyn Lau, whose parents were Chinese immigrants, has no trouble ignoring feng shui. "My relatives, being a house, looked into that sort of thing—where the mountains were, where the wind was going to blow," recalls Lau. "I rolled my eyes at that stuff even when I was a little kid." She rolled them again two years ago when she purchased a condo in downtown Vancouver. The suite number—404—was considered an omen in Chinese, the number four sounds like the word for death. "Certainly, with two loans, it's like death and more death," says Lau. "But when it comes down to getting a good deal or living in a place that can meet death, I chose the good deal." Willing to thank her nose at feng shui, Lau adds, "I've been just fine here." ☐

THE MASTER PLAN

The diagram, an astrological chart representing the different aspects of life, is placed over a floor plan to make a diagnosis.



ties include such inexpensive accessories as mirrors, crystals, wind chimes, plants, water fountains and aquariums. "It's the getting acquainted for the house," says Sam-Ping.

Many feng shui experts use a bagua—a kind of map—as a diagnostic tool. The bagua is an octagonal chart with eight areas, or "corners," each representing a different aspect of life: love, relationships, children, wealth, power, career, knowledge, family and wealth. The master places the bagua over a scaled floor plan of the house or office, and proceeds to make each area to the person's life situation. Sometimes, in an L-shaped house, there will be large gaps in the bagua. "If the wealth corner is missing," says Toronto interior designer Adrienne Le Marchand, "you're kind of interestingly enough, it will often be missing in their lives. They never seem to be able to get ahead financially."

Yuen Yip, a Toronto master and a former engineer, has developed computer software to analyze the flow of air in his clients' homes and offices. Yip—who launched his own Web site earlier this month—has created an electronic version of the ancient feng shui compass, incorporating Chinese astrology and other elements, enabling him to balance yin and yang, synchronize the energy in a house with the energy of its inhabitants and work of the most favorable location and



TRADITIONAL HEALING:

In Vietnam, where most people rely on traditional treatments and turn to Western medical ways only in emergencies, a man with severe chest complaints undergoes cupping. The warmed glasses are applied to his torso and head at a street-side medical stall in Ho Chi Minh City to improve his circulation.

Alternative pressure

More than 60 Canadian doctors who use unorthodox therapies such as acupuncture, chirochne therapy (chiropractic) and homeopathy gathered in Toronto for the first meeting of the Canadian Complementary Medical Association. Dr. Stephen Madsen, a Victoria physician who practices homeopathy, said the umbrella organization was created last July to campaign as a national level against authoritarian medical organizations' "restrained professional attitudes towards complementary approaches." In recent years, colleges of physicians and surgeons in at least four provinces have brought disciplinary actions against practitioners of complementary medicine. Now, there are signs of change. New legislation arising from a private member's bill took effect in Alberta last October, allowing physicians greater freedom to use complementary therapies. In Ontario, opposition Liberal MPP Monte Ikonko has a similar bill ready to introduce to the legislature. About 500 of Canada's more than 35,000 active physicians now use complementary therapies. Beyond that, Statistics Canada reports that 8.3 million Canadians sought treatment outside the conventional medical establishment last year. Two allopathic doctors, who specialize in acupuncture and has campaigned actively for the recognition of complementary treatments, declared: "People no longer want to be dictated to by a paternalistic medical profession."

Closing in on hepatitis B

A drug developed in Canada is shaping up as a potent treatment for hepatitis B, the debilitating liver disease that chronically affects more than 100,000 Canadians and an estimated 300 million people around the world. Two drug companies reported that in a clinical trial involving 350 hepatitis B victims in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan, 67 per cent of those taking the drug lamivudine showed reduced liver damage. Lamivudine, which is based on the same molecule as the AIDS drug ZTC, was developed by Menzies-Bard Bionchem Pharmaceuticals and licensed to the British-based drug giant Glaxo-Wellcome. Dr. James Tyrrell, dean of medicine at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, who first demonstrated that lamivudine worked against hepatitis B, called the new drug "very promising." Currently, the only treatment for chronically infected hepatitis B patients is the injection of the protein alpha interferon, which is effective in only about 10 per cent of cases.

Cancer reports

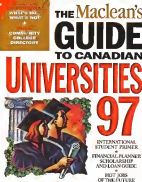
Although the ultraviolet rays contained in sunlight can cause the deadly skin cancer known as melanoma, an American research scientist says that concentrated doses of UV can also kill cancer cells. Dr. Haichen Wu, a researcher at New York City's Mount Sinai School of Medicine, reported that in laboratory tests intense doses of ultraviolet A—part of the UV spectrum—killed breast cancer cells. He told the annual meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research in San Diego that UVA appeared to enhance the activity of a gene called p53, which plays a key role in tumor suppression. It was too soon, Wu added, to say whether high doses of UV might eventually be used to treat cancer—and warned that his finding should not lead people into making experiments to cure their potentially deadly rays. According to the Canadian Dermatology Association's estimate, 3,200 Canadians will develop melanoma this year. In other cancer news from San Diego:

- Researchers from Ontario's University of Guelph have detected carcinogenic substances known as aromatic amines in the breast milk of mothers who smoke. Biochemist Lillian Dedikian said that aromatic amines—found in tobacco smoke, barbecued meats, factory smoke and other sources—have been linked to bladder cancer in humans, and might play a role in human breast cancer.
- People who consume large amounts of a substance called lycopenes—found mainly in tomatoes—appear to be less likely to develop lung cancer than people who consume little lycopene. Researchers from New York City's Columbia University found significantly lower lycopene levels in a group of lung cancer patients than in a group of cancer-free people. The researchers concluded that people with the lowest lycopene levels had about a three-times-higher cancer risk than those with high levels.

- A usually inactivated virus that causes genital warts may be partly responsible for prostate cancer. Scientists from the U.S. National Cancer Institute said a study of California hospital records showed that men infected with the human papilloma virus in their 20s and 30s were more likely to develop prostate cancer later in life. The papilloma virus has also been linked to an increased risk of cervical cancer in women. The report said that papilloma infection by itself may not cause cancer, but the virus may act in combination with other sex-related infections.

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WHAT MATTERS TO CANADIANS



Trent Frayne

Even after Jackie, progress comes slowly

The near hysteria that accompanied Tiger Woods around the Augusta National golf course at the Masters tournament the other Sunday afternoon was clearly reminiscent of the appearance of Jackie Robinson in a major-league baseball uniform half a century ago. Then, as now, there was the notion that a statement was being made whose ramifications reached beyond a mere game. Robinson, starting for the old Brooklyn Dodgers following a magnificent minor-league career in Montreal, was the first black to play in the modern major leagues. During that, he opened the gate for hundreds of black guys to play beside white guys.

Similarly, Woods and his marvelous swing attained a new status not just for black golfers but for everybody who plays the game. "He elevated the sport to a new sociological plateau," Pulitzer Prize-

It's hard to see how the magic of Tiger Woods can change anything apart from the name atop the leader board

winning columnist Dave Anderson wrote in *The New York Times* the day after Woods's record-shattering Masters win. Still, if a drilling is ahead that golf and society are apt to change radically in the wake of the Tiger's triumph, there is Robinson's baseball lesson to illustrate how profoundly change comes.

For a fact, black players are everywhere in the big leagues—but in the upper echelons of the 30 teams there are only four black managers. And two of those are running Cincinnati's Monte A. Peche, 62, next month from the Dominican Republic, and Toronto's Clarence (Cito) Gwynn, 53 last month, from San Antonio, Tex. (Dusty Baker at San Francisco and Don Baylor at Denver are the others.) Only one other black man is in charge of anything significant in big-league ball clubs, the general manager of the New York Yankees, Rob Watson.

Gwynn, of course, was the first black manager to be a World Series winner, with the Blue Jays in 1993. Cito spent 11 years as a big-league outfielder for Atlanta and San Diego. He is a fairly unworldly man, usually calm and soft-spoken, then he must have been in crisis for the first time in his career last year's season, but since that moment, he suggested criticism by three newspapers was mostly justified. As a young player, he spent two seasons with Austin in the Texas League. It was there that he ran into a modest segment of the unbecomingly obese Jackie Robinsons called Gwynn. Occasionally, Cito will talk about prepping back then, a full 17 years after Jackie Robinson broke the barrier.

He remembers, without a trace of bitterness, that black players weren't allowed in stadiums where the white players stayed and that the drinking fountain in restaurants still had signs over them that said "Colored only" and "White only."

"There were three or so black guys on the Austin ball club," he told me. "There was Jose Cruz and this guy Samuel Manuel and me. When we'd get to a town like El Paso or Arlington, the three of us had to go out in the country and find a black motel. Black

guys couldn't sit in dining rooms with white guys, either."

Cito chuckled, shaking back. "Sometimes the white guys would have to stand and wait in a crowded restaurant but we'd be served right away in a half-empty black one. So one of our white guys, Joe Serrano, always came and ate with us."

He'd hear racial slurs from the stands and from rival players. His coach often turned when he heard the cursing. Still, he stayed in control of his outward emotions. How come? "My mom always said there wasn't too much a person could do about it so sometimes the best thing is to walk all, just to close your eyes to it," Cito said.

Robinson, an intense young athlete at UCLA, closed his mouth if not his ears, as part of a restriction placed on him by Tomahawk Ricker, the Dodgers executive who signed him for the Montreal farm team in 1946. Even there he encountered hostility from teammates and the Royals manager, Clay Hopper, who had dealt with Ricker's act to force him to run a ball club with a black man on it.

It is a curious footnote that Robinson's teammate in Montreal was Al Campanis, who thereby had ample opportunity to witness Robinson's intelligence and discipline. Yet 40 years later, Campanis as a Dodgers executive told a network TV interviewer, Ted Koppel, that the reason there were so few black executives in baseball was that "they don't have the necessary"—a statement that cost him his own job.

Robinson was a sensational player, winning the batting title and leading the Royals to a Little World Series victory over Louisville. He came close to a hit and he was hit hard frequently at second base. Elected to the Dodgers, he continued to bear indignities and injury, and/or (ing death threats, racial epithets, resentment teammates and even a threatened boycott by ball players. Ernie Slaughter, a Cardinal outfielder, did far from the base path to slash at Robinson's ankle with his spikes. Once, helping to ease the strain, shortstop Pee Wee Reese stepped across a second base and laid his arm across Robinson's shoulders. The gesture raised the rating to night and became a sort of symbol of unity, at least on the ball field.

With change so slow, it's hard to see how the magic of the appealing young Eldrick (Tiger) Woods can change anything apart from the name atop the leader board. Kids from crowded black neighborhoods aren't overnight going to find the space to play golf, nor are the private clubs suddenly opening their gates and welcoming any old black kids through.

Actually, Frayne's race-bias Masters is exactly a lovely tip on the sports scene, an aberration similar to that of Arthur Ashe's impact on tennis following his Wimbledon win in 1975. Black guys are still rare birds on the men's tennis tour, and the same goes for young black golfers. In either game, as in baseball, race moves with the shading speed of an iceberg. Not much different, you might say, than in corporate boardrooms.



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Books

Poetic licentiousness

Byron was, in a sense, the Mick Jagger of his day

BYRON, THE FLAWED ANGEL

By Phyllis Grosskurth
(Macfarlane Walter & Ross
510 pages, \$39.95)

When George Gordon, Lord Byron married Annabella Milbanke on a winter's day in 1815, the poet's demons had prepared an exquisite torture for them both. No sooner had the couple set off on their honeymoon coach, than Byron began to sing a gloomy Albanian dirge to him up-bellied birds. Soon, he was bitterly denouncing her mother, and predicting that their marriage would end in a separation. It was a misanthropic of colossal proportions. The handsome poet, 27, had recently become famous for his scandalously satirical verse epic *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. He was an outrageous rake who was conducting an affair with his own half sister, Augusta Annabella was a neurotic, 20-year-old virgin who, in a way, was a match for Byron's soul.

The story of how those two lived out, almost irresolvably, at least each other, forms one of the most riveting sections in Phyllis Grosskurth's splendid new biography, *Byron, The Flawed Angel*. The first major study of the poet in four decades, it explores the turbulent forces behind Byron's bold and outrageous public persona—he was, in a sense, the Mick Jagger of his day—and the weak, disillusioned man beneath. Toronto-based Grosskurth—the author of other biographies, including a one on psychopathologist Michael Riehl—shows how Byron's entire life was dominated, from first to last, by women.

His father, the rabid "Mad Jack" Byron, abandoned his family shortly before George Gordon's birth in 1788. Byron was raised by his mother and overbearing mother, Catherine, and spent much of his early and teenage years bitterly reflecting upon her infidelity. The bitter fact, arguably, for the deformed foot that had plagued him since birth. Later, having made his way into society on the strength of an inherited lordship and the meagre income from a landowner's



Grosskurth: he was surrounded by scandal

estate, he fell under the spell of another older woman, Lady Melbourne, a London matriarch of questionable ethics.

Grosskurth is convincing when she argues that Byron's need for a mother figure helped define him. Even his frequent dieting—he fought his tendency to grow pudgy with strict regimes of vinegar, water and rice—can be seen as an antiracine rebellion against a dominating and overbearing mother. But more intriguing might have been placed on the absence of a father figure in Byron's life. In later years, Byron confided that, despite his many male companions, he had no deep feeling for male friendship. It was as if he had never learned by example to be comfortable with his own masculinity. There was an emptiness in him, a vacuum of identity, that he sought to fill with the sensation of a woman's period and touch.

For two years beginning in 1803, Byron made the journey through southern Europe that would inspire his long tale about Childe Harold, the poet's after age, and the first of

the great romantic anthems. Grosskurth credits Byron with the invention of a new sensibility, in which the lonely outsider beloved by an entire generation of romantics was glorified by the addition of what she calls "an erotic dimension." Many women, quite rightly, identified Byron's sensitive, sexually predatory hero with the poet. They flocked to meet him—some to sleep with him—and it was in the resulting atmosphere of scandal and intrigue that Byron, irresistibly, gravitated towards the poet Annabella.

At this point in her narrative, Grosskurth is able to relieve her focus wonderfully, thanks to her unprecedented access to private collections of letters written by Annabella, Augusta and others. The new sources show her to find the dark comedy by which Byron and Annabella tilted towards each other in a haze of misrecognition and false hopes. Byron thought that the respectable Annabella could save him from past sins—Grosskurth suggests that his conscience was troubled not only by the kiss with Augusta, but by various unspoken adventures. The poet, who was deeply in debt, also thought, mistakenly, that his wife was rich.

After a few months, Byron left Annabella and England, never to return to either again. Grosskurth creates a vivid picture of his wandering about Europe in his self-imposed calico—carried by a lumbering coach that he had modified, graciously, on that point, to accommodate the "ladies" he had in a motelside palace filled with a menagerie of animals, quarrels, quarrels, quarrels and judas. His 1000 single, he boasted, with more than 200 women, some in the city, but a visiting friend found him "pale, bleated and mellow." Yet through it all he was managing to create his greatest work, the philosophical essay *Ways of Sensibility*.

Grosskurth is most sympathetic, though the poet is a cool yet sympathetic, honest. She brings a freshness to freshly written-about events such as Byron's relationship with the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley and his circle, and with his own mistress, Teresa Galt. Byron died in Greece in 1824, at the age of 36. He had gone to help the Greek struggle for political freedom from the Turks, and though he was so great (and he was), the Greeks in this day have his sacrifice. In his final hour, Byron died out for the hero he had left behind Augusta, and his daughter by Annabella, Ada. Ada would grow up to be a mathematical genius who, with Charles Babbage, would invent the computer, but her famous father, dying in the name of a Greek war, never saw her.

JOHN BARKER

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BOOKS Worlds of wonder

Oliver Sacks has become famous as an explorer of the mind, a self-styled "neuroanthropologist" who, in such best-sellers as *Awakenings* (1970) and *An Anthropologist on Mars* (1985), has tapped the rich material of the brain's workings that beyond neurology: the 60-year-old New Yorker has long held other fascinations in common. One is travel; as more recently, travel writing: the claims among his devotees that the great authors of exploration—Humboldt, Darwin, Melville). Another avocation is history, particularly letters and cycloids—greatly plastic whose personalities predominate. Nobody but Oliver Sacks would try to bring these three services of interest together into a single book. But that is precisely what he attempts in *The Island of the Colorblind* (Knopf, 266 pages, \$24). The result is a syncretic mix of neurology, geography and history—and, for what it is, an endlessly diverting read.

The narrative begins in the tiny South Pacific island of Pingelap, which Sacks visited in 1984, where about one-third of the inhabitants have genetic achromatopsia—complete colorblindness, allowing the sufferer to see only in black and white. After Pingelap, Sacks and his twin islanders go to Pohnpei, where a large community of achromatopsia live in relative isolation. That's all to Galt, where Sacks explores the mystery of lycia-bloody, a debilitating neurological condition that affects the indigenous Chamorro people. One hypothesis: that lycia-bloody is caused by eating flour made from coconut seeds. That leads to Sacks's next stop, Bora, where rare and beautiful orchids still flourish—a sight that sparks an epiphany in the stricken neurologist: "I feel a profound sense of being at home," he writes, "a sort of compassion with the earth."

The *Island of the Colorblind* is decidedly odd, baffling on occasion, even self-indulgent. At times, Sacks seems more interested in the islanders' lush pleasures than in the neurological conditions he has come to study. Yet those shortcomings are hardly detractions, thanks largely to the fact that Sacks is a fine descriptive writer. His descriptions—on, for example, religion, Sacks and colorblindness—are so carefully constructed. True, Sacks has other arts carved away by landscapes. But at least he manages to take his readers with him.

JOE CHIDLEY



Films

Captive harmonies

The true story of a prison-camp choir is stirring

PARADISE ROAD

Directed by Bruce Beresford

War stories and women's movies. They do not usually go together. But *Paradise Road* makes a rare exception. Based on true stories of women imprisoned by the Japanese in the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) during the Second World War, it is an extraordinary tale—a kind of *Chinatown* for the *River Kwai*. The action begins in 1942, as the British are about to surrender Singapore to Japanese troops. Evacuating the city,

women and children set sail on a ship, which is promptly sunk by enemy planes. They swim ashore to Sumatra and end up in a prison camp, struggling to survive torture, malaria, barbaric living conditions—and all this to join the "satan sheet brigade" of sex slaves at the Japanese officers' quarters. Like the whaling films on the *River Kwai*, the women make music: their act of defiance. Glenn Close stars as Adrienne, an English prisoner who sublimates her anger on forming a choir. It is a risky act, a madcap attempt to carve a piece of paradise

Margulies (left), Cho, Close: music to soothe the savage beast

out of captivity. But the music, which is exquisite—and based on classical scores transcribed from memory by the real-life prisoners—does in fact soothe the savage beast. Even the brutal Japanese guards succumb to its spell.

In casting the prisoners, Australian director Bruce Beresford (*Dancing Queen*, *Damage*) has constituted an impressive ensemble of women. They include Pauline Collins (*Shogun*), Jennifer Threlkeld (*Princess*) as a model groomed to an imprisoned soldier, Kit Sun Juliana Margulies as the camp's only American, and Peggy's Frances McDormand, who strikes the one second-guesser note, in the role of a German Jew with an overworked secret.

As a tale of women from Victorian classes and cultures finding strength in hardship, the narrative is a little thin. So is the dramatic tone, which slips from harrowing to humorous, then to gloom. Beresford directs with his usual flat-out lyricism. His cinema does on jungle panoramas, swift rain, mountains shrouded in mist. *Paradise Road* has to be one of the prettiest prison-camp movies ever made. There are also moments that very persuasively close to the aged women children of less dignified films—including a gratuitous nude shower scene, and a torture episode in which a lovely young nurse (Cho) is threatened to be killed all day in the blistering sun surrounded by sleep-deprived soldiers. Beresford seems torn between finding a noble tragedy in the inmates' plight and a Girl's Own jungle adventure. Still, the compelling truth in the story shines through. And perhaps he is just being true to the spirit of his subject—by generating some escapism amid the equator.

BRIAN D. JOHNSON

White-hot House

MURDER AT 1600

Directed by Douglas Little

For many Americans, penetrating the White House is a major fantasy—whence the recent revelations that the Lincoln bedroom has become the world's precast bed-and-breakfast. And in recent years, Hollywood has been providing its own simulated access. In *Oliver* (1993) and *The American President* (1995), the White House served as a setting for romantic comedy. Last summer, independent Day broke it to bits. And this year, three thrillers feature a presidency in the grip of criminal conspiracy. Clint Eastwood's *Absolute Power*, *Air Force One* (opening in July, with Harrison Ford as the president)—and now *Murder at 1600*.

The premise is reminiscent of *Absolute Power*, in which the Secret Service covers up the murder of a woman killed after a bout of rough sex with the president. In *Murder at 1600*, a woman is strangled to death in a White House washroom shortly after a tryst with the president's son. And once again, the Secret Service must provide a coverup. Wesley Snipes stars as Harlan Rags, a no-nonsense homicide cop and amateur historian who happens to have intimate knowledge of secret tunnels leading into the White House. He finds a precious ally in Alan Cho (Diane Lane), a Secret Service agent—and former Olympic skier—who turns against her superior boss (Daniel Beldak) from TV's *Murder*.

Squeezes secret tunnels

thriller with few twists and no politics, just a fuzzy subplot about a hostage crisis in Korea. The characters are wily, thin, and the script takes a ludicrous twist at the climax—one that suggests the president's wife's fantasy is to have a love in the White House with a good night hawk.

Murder at 1600 is a political thriller with few twists and no politics, just a fuzzy subplot about a hostage crisis in Korea. The characters are wily, thin, and the script takes a ludicrous twist at the climax—one that suggests the president's wife's fantasy is to have a love in the White House with a good night hawk.

R.D.J.

Allan Fotheringham

A book a day will keep the shrink away

Lawrence Martin is a lanky ex-sports writer from Hamilton, ON, the great asset came from the sports pages. He has become a columnist and critic in both *Maclean's* and *Washington Post*. He looks like an unemployed Hamilton Ford.

Because he is from Hamilton, he of course loathes Toronto and refuses to live there where everything is supposed to happen. He has settled in Ottawa, writing books. His first volume on Jesus Christ appeared in 1995 and in September I think he is going to cause a bit of a sensation with his book on Lucien Bouchard, which reveals a Jekyll/Hyde character.

Last year Martin came up with the idea of "Canada Book Day"—April 23. It is the Valentine's Day concept turned over to books. On Book Day you give a book (and if it's a best one, a book as well) to a friend.

Martin got it along last year and it was such a screaming idea that the Writers' Development Trust now have editors working on it. As the ex-sports jock puts it, physical fitness is fine, but nobody talks much about intellectual fitness—of which books are the best promoter. Reading is a lot easier than climbing on an ab machine.

He claims he got interested in the idea when he saw that in a multiple choice quiz a majority of respondents identified U. Thoreau as "a subservient." It seemed to be the Dr. Phil 510 reading plan for the brain. Give to a friend *Being with the Super Heroes*, David Myers's hilarious recounting of his life as Hal Jordan, from *Brain Power* and *Garbo* and Douglas Fairbanks to Carol B. DeMille and Charlie Chaplin and Hedy and Louella and the Eleventh Commandment (Thou Shalt Not Be Found Out). It was published in 2005 by Potomac.

If you're still puzzled by Broun and Coates and what else (who isn't) there is *The Significance*, written by Donko Dodder (love that byline) for Random House in 2008. The most surprising thing about *Boundwater: A Life*, written by a husband-wife team in Princeton in 1995, is that the volume isn't product of a New Brunswick writer who rose to Churchill's elbow was also a very skilled stenographer, sly liar and all, bedding some of Britain's best.

The acronym of the nation, of course, is the very small book *Kit*,



by the insatiably famous Kathryn Harrison, detailing how at age 20 she had an extended affair with her father, who is a congressman living in the western United States and undoubtedly will be "outed" within a New York minute by *The National Enquirer*. It is so weird I'm anything left after that? But it is interesting.

I think Pierre Berton (dying like 88 looks in 97 years) feels *They were his first week*, but I like *Drifting Home* best, his wars and teaching recounting of taking all time—18 is a 27—back on a headfirst trip through the Yukon where he was born and raised. I can't see how anyone can write better than *The Blood* medal.

According to Gary by John Irving who stole the beautiful Janet Turnbull from our shores, for which I will never forgive him.

Kenneth Tynan, London's finest theatre critic and George Bernard Shaw published *Corbair*, a collection of his reviews, for *Language* in 1961. Equally good was *The Life of Kenneth Tynan* by his widow Kathleen—born in Peaslee Creek, Alberta, sister of David Huxley, daughter of famed C.K. correspondence Matthew Huxley—who details Tynan's death of smoking and emphysema and roughly living (Macmillan, 1987).

The best sportswriter who ever lived, Red Smith, published his *75 All-Star Friends*—from Babe Ruth to Granddaddy Rice to Connie Mack and Sock Salts—for Athlete in 1982. You can find it.

Any young scribbler who wants to write about politics should go toward raw and pained Peter C. Newman's *Resurgence in Power*, his classic tale on John Dunderhoffer. There's wonderful lunch reading in Karl E. Meyer's *Genesis of American Newspapers* Colburn—born Benjamin Franklin through Will Whitman and Ring Lardner to Mike Boyle and Russell Baker (Oxford, 1990).

Tom Wolfe, when he was renegade journalism in his New York magazine-writing days, used to dump all over modern journalism, saying they were missing the point. His first novel, *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, proved his point exactly, showing the 1980s Wall Street greed that later landed him in jail. There's a fine book by Stanley Weyman (Dutton, 1990) on *Vanities*—Queen Victoria's world among the 11 genre romances who served her. You can still find it for *Book Day* there's a great answer to *Search of History* (Weiner Books, 1978) by Theodore H. White, who made American political reporting—just as much as Newman's reconstructed Canadian journalism—with his master-crafted dishing of presidential campaigns.

Foley Meacham's *My Father's Son*, Norman Miller's *Marjorie*, Mary McCarthy's *The Stones of Florence*, John Kenneth Galbraith's *The Scandal*.

And there's something new. A thriller (Lafayette, Brown) filed *The Modbus Mystery* by somebody named Anna Porter. Don't know who she is, but she looks like a conser.

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